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THE *MUSIC* JOURNAL

DEDICATED TO THE ADVANCEMENT OF MUSIC IN AMERICA



In this Issue

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 1947

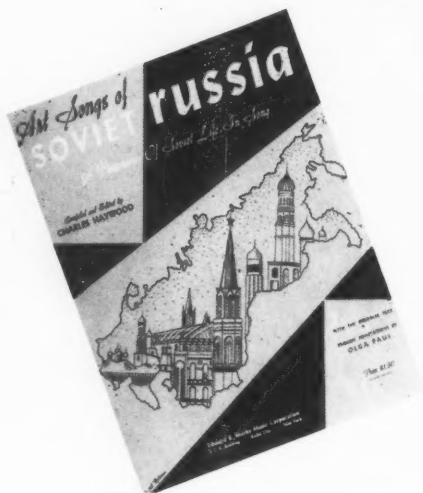
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THE MUSIC JOURNAL

IN THIS ISSUE

FORUM discussions that deal with the "problems" of the contemporary American composers are scheduled with considerable regularity on the programs of the meetings of our musical organizations. We have listened to many of them and have taken part in several. For some reason they always sound so much alike that we begin to wonder dreamily whether we are back in Detroit one year ago, or in Cleveland two years ago, or in Cincinnati three years ago, or in St. Louis four years ago. Or maybe we are hearing a recording that was played at all these meetings.

Certainly the assimilation of newly composed music into the repertory of the individuals and organizations that produce a great portion of our musical fare is a matter of greatest importance to everyone who is concerned with the growth of the musical life of our nation. There is every reason for holding these discussions even though the same viewpoints and arguments may be presented time and again. But the fact that there is so much repetition must indicate that no campaign of action follows the discussions.



In the first place, the audiences at these meetings are usually composed of people who are already interested in a larger presentation of new music. They are the alert and progressive members of their organization who take the time and spend the money to attend meetings. The preaching is done to a group of the already "saved," and the missionary work is left undone. It is this situation that leads us to devote the greater part of this issue to statements presented at a recent meeting sponsored by Composers-

Authors Guild and the National Federation of Music Clubs. We believe that the ideas expressed by them are generally representative of the thinking of the leaders who are concerned with the over-all problem of the impact of new music on the American public, particularly of new music written by American composers.

Most of the contentions concerning ways and means of securing increased presentation of new music to larger audiences are stated in rather general terms and with few suggestions for implementation and action. In listening to the discussions we sometimes wish that there could be more constructive thinking concerning practical everyday procedures that can be followed by individuals and groups under normal conditions and with average resources. Let's find a few of the bottlenecks and go to work on them instead of swinging wide in an endeavor to include 140 million people all at once.



Where is the worst bottleneck? Here is certainly one of the most effective: the teachers of college and conservatory level who continue to feed their students the same repertory year after year. If you don't believe this, just stand around a college or conservatory hallway for a half day and see what music the students are carrying when they come out of studios where they have completed lessons in voice, piano, violin, and so forth. Look over the selections that are required for entrance examinations given to major music students in colleges and conservatories.

Now these students are going to be tomorrow's performers and teachers. What are they going to per-

form and teach? Why the very music that was taught to them and they, in turn, will develop another generation that will be run through the same standard repertory mill.

Isn't this a logical place to start? It is an "organized" and well-defined field in which our several national music organizations have power and prestige. Why not concentrate on this one approach for a time and see what will happen—instead of gunning in every direction, trying to include artists, managers, publishers, critics, and the American audience all at once.

Perhaps you have a better idea for a specific, practical starting point. If so, let's have it.

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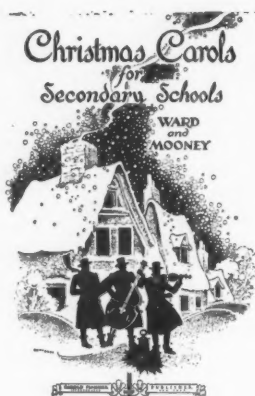
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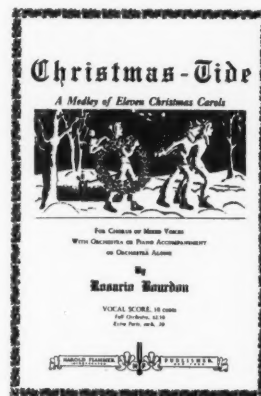
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THE MUSIC JOURNAL

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Is American Music Being Given a Fair Hearing?

A summary of the approach to the discussion of this very important question is outlined here by the chairman of the Composers-Authors Guild Symposium, Dr. Isadore Freed.

FOR years there has been a great deal of controversy on the subject of American music. This controversy actually centers around two questions and how one answers them: "What is American music?" and "Is there any good American music?" Everything else brought into the controversy is really in the nature of variations on the two basic themes.

Fundamentally, American music is a controversial subject for a variety of reasons. Some individuals believe that there is no American people in the same sense as there is an Italian people or a Chinese people; therefore there can be no American music. Others think of music as an international, a universal expression. To them, of course, there can be no American music.

With regard to the second question, "Is there any good American music?", one must recognize that only recently has the American composer become a force to reckon

with. A half century ago very little music was being written here. Today mountains of music are being created in our country. Naturally this music mirrors the twentieth century rather than the nineteenth, and it cannot possibly sound like Schubert or Tchaikowsky or Brahms.

Here we reach the crux of the question. If one judges twentieth century American music with a nineteenth century ear, it is not so good as Tchaikowsky or Brahms. Nor were these two so good as Mozart and Haydn to those who listened with an eighteenth century ear. But if one judges American music with a twentieth century ear, it compares very favorably with the best that Europe and South America have to offer.

Why then is there so much expressed and unexpressed opposition to the performance of American music? Composers-Authors Guild wanted to find out. It sponsored a symposium on American music and

invited specialists in the various branches of music to express themselves on the subject—a metropolitan critic, a small town critic, a publisher, a composer, a performer, a manager, and a music teacher. The question to be discussed, "Is American music being given a fair hearing?", was framed so that one could answer yes or no or express any shade of opinion between these extremes.

Composers-Authors Guild knows that there is opposition to American music. It hoped through this symposium to bring this opposition into the open and then try to combat it in an intelligent manner. For this reason it planned the symposium with considerable care. A committee drew up a series of leading questions in several areas. These were addressed to the various speakers, who were asked to deal specifically with these questions in their papers.

(Continued on page 60)

On the afternoon of October 8, 1947 the Composers-Authors Guild held a public symposium in Carnegie Recital Hall, New York City. The subject of the symposium, "Is American Music Being Given a Fair Hearing?", was discussed by speakers whose statements appear in the following pages. A summary

of these statements was presented later in the day at a dinner meeting of the National Federation of Music Clubs and further discussion of the question took place there. The principal talks presented at the dinner meeting are also included in this issue.

Editor



Stating the Question

ISADORE FREED

Composer, Head of Composition Department,
Hartt School of Music, Moderator of Symposium

THE question, "Is American music being given a fair hearing?" is a controversial one; there will be many opinions regarding it. In addition, it is an extremely complex question. Almost no other subject that I can think of is more complicated and many-faceted than American music.

The dissemination of music itself, generally speaking, depends on so many different people—composers, publishers, music dealers, performers, teachers, managers, instrument-builders, unions, broadcasters, recording companies, and finally the public itself. But American music adds to the already complicated picture such issues as the new versus the old; the matter of foreign artists appearing on American soil and American artists on foreign soil; questions of national patriotisms and prejudices; of whether or not English is a singable language. Incidentally, in Bulgaria they have solved the question of opera in the native tongue in an eminently satisfactory manner.

A man came to see me several years ago, during the war, a Bulgarian composer from Sofia. He showed me some of his music, including an opera in Bulgarian. I remarked, "Surely it was a waste of time to compose an opera in Bulgarian. Where could you get the singers?"

"In Bulgaria," he told me, "if they want to sing in the Sofia Royal Opera, they sing in Bulgarian and what's more, I have had two operas mounted in Bulgaria. And what's still more—we do the whole operatic repertoire in Bulgarian. This in-

cludes *Carmen*, *Faust* and even *Die Meistersinger*."

"Why do you do such a crazy thing?" I asked. "Surely Wagner doesn't sound right in Bulgarian."

His reply was a classic. He said, "You see, the people in Bulgaria unfortunately speak only Bulgarian and they like it. Consequently, they listen to *Die Meistersinger* with Bulgarian ears."

Should we Americans wonder what kind of ears we listen to opera with? If the English language, which is spoken by more than 300,000,000 people scattered all over the earth is not good enough for opera, ought we to scrap the language and get a decent one? Or should we perhaps scrap opera? Or is it perchance our habits of thought which need an overhauling?

Following Fashions

American music, too, is concerned with questions of feminine snobishness. Just as American women, the best dressed on earth, look to Paris for fashions while the French women in general are quite ordinarily dressed, so in music, American women, who contribute largely to its support in this country, go in for foreign artists and foreign repertoires. This causes a resistance to American music not based on intrinsic musical values at all. I recall an incident of a society matron in Los Angeles who would not engage Godowsky to play at her home because he happened to be visiting his daughter Dagmar at that time in Hollywood, and that made him a local pianist. Since the grass is al-

ways greener in the next valley, can it be that a symphony by Shostakovich is always more attractive than one by Ernest Bloch because one lives in Moscow and the other in San Francisco?

Then there is distrust of anything new, and perhaps—let us say it—American music is not so good as European music. Our music is fifty years old, their is five hundred years old. Yet only two years ago publishers, broadcasters, and recording companies fell over themselves about Latin American music, and certainly this music is even younger than ours and not nearly so good.

Another complication is the interdependence and highly organized character of music. No part of it is a free agent. The performer depends on the manager, but the manager depends on the performer, and both depend on the critic and the public. The composer needs the publisher and the performer, yet both need the composer. Thus we see how no part of music really stands alone.

What are the facts with respect to the performance of American music. Is it true, as some claim, that it is played enough, or do statistics point the other way. A recent survey (September 1947) by *Musical America* shows that the Cincinnati Symphony, which played 86 works last season, and the NBC Symphony, which played 58 works, each devoted 2 per cent of their total repertoire to American music. This means that out of a total of 144 works the two orchestras together played four American works. Among the great Eastern orchestras, the Boston Sym-

(Continued on page 47)

American Composers' Music

DOUGLAS MOORE

Composer and Chairman of Music Department,
Columbia University



THERE is one premise which must be admitted before any reasonable discussion of the problems of the American composer can take place. Unfamiliar music is always less in demand than the familiar. This is an inevitable part of the musical process. It has always been true and it is even more apparent today with a rapidly expanding audience which is being catered to by a highly organized industry, eager, as any right-minded industry would be, for maximum profit.

It is therefore obvious that sensible program making, except when devised for a very special and sophisticated audience, will include only a limited amount of the unfamiliar. That is true in all fields save the popular, where special techniques operate to break down resistance to the new, and where the new is really essential because the old has not enough survival value to provide for a very large public demand.

Various factors of selection govern the small part of the average program which safely can be devoted to the unfamiliar. An unfamiliar piece by a composer whose style is already known and liked and whose prestige is great is less of a risk than a work by a little known composer. And if the latter category is called upon, a work couched in a language resembling that of some well-known composer has a better chance of immediate success than something of striking originality. But the path of the new in music has always been steep and thorny and will no doubt remain so.

With this initial premise in mind,

some of the criticism directed toward the contemporary composer are downright silly. The manager and quite often the performer tell us gloomily that the presentation of our music involves sacrifice because audiences do not want it. This we know and appreciate. But they go on to offer some useless advice in which I am compelled to admit they are joined by some critics. They say the trouble lies in the nature of our offerings. Now if the American composer could only produce another Beethoven's *Fifth Symphony*, Mendelssohn's *Violin Concerto*, or Verdi's *Aida*, the public would come flocking to his standard.

Music for Today

Well, in the first place, no composer of the twentieth century could possibly write such a work. Suppose one hundred years ago the great-grandfathers of today's managers, performers, and critics had said to composers of the Romantic period, "Why don't you write like Bach in his Brandenburg Concertos, or like Vivaldi in his sonatas, or like Handel in his operas? Then you might possibly get a performance or two." The works which we are expected to emulate were perfect expressions of their own age and as such were fresh and interesting, not stale and derivative. Now possibly the Romantic age was a better one than our own. I am not sure of this, but I am sure that we composers have to think and feel in this age if our music is to come to life at all. And the twentieth century, which has been derided by many alleged lovers of music, is not

one to dismiss lightly. In the year 2047 there may well be wails for works like the Hindemith *Matthis der Maler*, the Stravinsky *Symphonie de Psaumes*, or the Prokofieff *Second Violin Concerto*. These are works for any age to be proud of, and what is more they have won a place for themselves on programs which is fairly secure.

No, the music must be new and fresh even if audiences take more kindly at first to the imitative variety. Perhaps some of you may think that because I have mentioned no American work besides these three I am prepared to admit that the music of the American composers is inferior. That it is less celebrated is obvious, and that fact brings us to the crux of the argument. These three works and the nineteenth century favorites I mentioned above were not written by unknown composers. They were compositions of men already established in public esteem. In each case the public expected and the public got something of genuine quality. All these men were composers whose careers had been built by the performers, managers, critics, and public which gave them opportunity and encouraged them. Was the sole factor in their success their individual great talent? Is the relative non-success of the American composer to be explained by saying that there is no talent in the Western hemisphere? If that is true, heredity has played us an odd trick, because we seem to have displayed all the other talents of our European ancestors.

Continued on page 50

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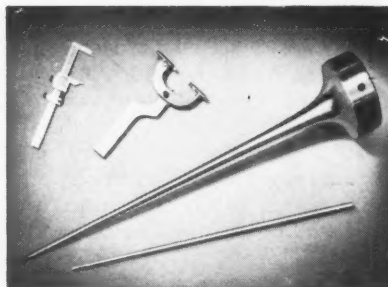


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GLADYS SWARTHOUT

Radio, Opera, and Concert Soprano

PLENTY of good American music is being written, but not all of it published, to be sure. I have in my own files right now enough excellent songs by contemporary Americans to use ten new songs a season for the next ten years. Some of them are in manuscript, most of them in published form. They are good songs and I do not differentiate between good from the art standpoint and good from the public appeal standpoint. I feel very strongly that any good piece of music well performed will get the audience reaction that the artist naturally wants. I must qualify this by saying that no matter what the basic musical value of the particular composition may be, unless the artist is convinced of its worth and can perform it with all of his technical equipment and artistic conviction, it is not a good song for that particular artist to program.

Critics and New Music

Very often the New York critics justly pan a new piece because it has been given an inferior performance. It is very hard for a critic to evaluate a work which he has never heard before unless that piece is performed as the composer intended. I must say, however, that very often the critics incline to be more severe in their judgment of our native works than they are of importations. This tendency is both good and bad. It should be encouraging to the composer and the artist to feel that a higher standard is being set, but at the same time it can be discouraging to have a work shrugged off simply because it does not measure up to a Schubert *lied*. It is certainly the duty of the American singer to examine new American music carefully and to use as much of it as fits into a well-balanced program. It is an obligation which we must all assume, in addition to being a priv-



ilege. It is only through performance that we can build American song literature, and it is only comparatively recently that such building has been seriously undertaken. All that is necessary is to examine the programs of thirty or forty years ago in comparison with the programs of today to see that we have really made strides toward establishing in the minds of the public the importance of our own native output.

As far as the so-called provinces are concerned, that is where the vast majority of concerts are given, and if we do not program our finest material for those concerts we are doing a disservice to ourselves as artists, to the American composer, and to the American musical audience. Let me repeat that it is my deep conviction, based on experience, that good music performed well has universal appeal for an audience, whether that audience is in New York's Town Hall or Beatrice, Nebraska, or an audience made up of servicemen, the great majority of whom have never heard what we call concert music. I feel that the performing artist during the war should have learned this lesson, for

I could cite instance after instance where the finest music got a completely favorable reaction from our service personnel, whereas those same groups of servicemen walked out on poor performances.

I am sorry to say that certain managers have been responsible for making their artists sing meretricious programs on tour because they still seem to feel that the audiences in the so-called provinces are less musical than those in the big cities. It is certainly the duty of the manager to discuss with the artist a given program, but it is certainly unwise to dictate to the artist what he or she should sing. I know of one artist who, at a manager's insistence, sang the same program for five consecutive seasons and finally, in tears, said she would never sing again if she had to repeat that program for another season. If I may be personal for a moment, I sing the same program on tour that I sing in Chicago, Boston, Washington, or Carnegie Hall. I sang my Carnegie Hall program for three thousand marines in Quantico, and I must say that I find very little difference in the receptivity of these various groups.

Obligation of Artist

I naturally feel very strongly about American songs and their composers. Having worked closely with five of the contemporary young American composers and having sung their songs with great success, I feel that I owe them a great debt. I can never finish a concert without acceding to requests for songs by Americans which it has been my privilege to introduce, and I feel that it is definitely a part of my obligation as an American artist to present to the American public as much of the fine music which is being written today as it is possible to include in each of my programs.

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The Metropolitan Critic and New Music

MILES KASTENDIECK

Music Editor, *New York Journal-American*
Chairman, New York Music Critics' Circle

THE lot of the American composer is still not a happy one. Not so long ago it was the fashion to bewail the fact that he was not being heard at all; his future was in jeopardy. Conditions did improve, he did get more attention. The first performances of his works increased in number. As his music was heard, he gained some appreciation, but more important he learned whether his music had any audience appeal. He took heart. Having cleared this hurdle, however, he immediately ran into another obstacle, perhaps more formidable than the first—the problem of second, third, and fourth performances presented itself. Here he has been stymied down to the present moment. To the question, "Is American music being given a fair hearing?" the only answer is, "No."

Since we can never know a great deal about American music until it is heard in the concert halls, it remains for performers of music to place American works on their programs. Despite our musical awakening, we may still be musically immature, but we have certainly passed the point where we are content to drift along, soothed to complacency by hearing only the old masters. We are immediately interested in gadgets that make our homes more comfortable, we flock to the latest movies, we pore over the current best sellers, but we close our ears to the newest music and are inclined to look down our noses at anything resembling an all-American program. Our defense may be that the new music rasps our sensibilities more. Does it not at least command as

much attention in our everyday lives as each of the other experiences we take as a matter of course?

There is no need to put the old aside just for the new, but we must reclaim the best of our own contemporary music. Others who do creative work are not necessarily producing masterpieces, but we give them our attention. To close our ears to the work of American composers is unsportsmanlike, to say the least. What we need is a demand for repeated hearings of music found at least acceptable on first performance. To discover unknown talent and give it a break is still the greatest challenge in music today, but the discovery is not enough. Promotion is obligatory. We must go beyond the fetish of giving first performances only, and make further acquaintance with this music. It has become the duty of every musical performer to recognize that he is part of the lifeline in the art of music, that in bringing alive the musical scene he belongs to the times in which he lives.

Critics on Record

The Music Critics' Circle of New York has put itself on record as wanting to play a part in the building of American music. Its annual awards in the field of orchestral, of chamber, and of dramatic music are aimed to recognize the outstanding works among the first performances given during a single season. These have no monetary value, but they reflect mature judgment and publicize merit. They also serve in helping to build an American repertory.

The critics have gone further. They have attempted to promote the establishment of an American repertory by citing works reheard during a music season which they consider worthy of further cultivation. At this point their efforts have fallen on fairly barren ground. They have discovered that the number of American works actually reheard in the course of a single season is sparse indeed. Nothing could be more stultifying than such a state of affairs.

The individual critic worth his salt is almost obliged to take a tolerant attitude toward contemporary music. Think of his problem: he might even misjudge a new work which wins general acceptance! Therein he shows his wisdom as well as his common sense. It is his duty to point out on first hearing, if possible, what reservations he may have, but not allow them to cloud his judgment of the piece as a whole. Stravinsky's *Violin Concerto* is a case in point. When one critic heard it for the first time he wrote, "A banal and empty score. If one were to say that it is infantile, it would be an insult to childhood." Ten years later another critic wrote, "I have always found the work tender, poetical, magical, and heart rendingly Gallic." Beyond everything else the critic must guard against the very conservatism in the concert halls which is responsible for the dilemma of American music.

The critic can only blast away. It is the performer who determines the course of events. Behind him, unfortunately, may be the advice of a board of directors, a manager, a

(Continued on page 49)



New Music Frontiers

CARLETON SPRAGUE SMITH

Chief, Music Division, New York Public Library

SINCE I am connected with the Music Division of the New York Public Library, the Music Department of New York University, the National Music League, the Metropolitan Opera Association, and other organizations concerned with music, I might discuss one or several of these groups. Music obviously is one of my chief interests, but it is as a friend of contemporary composition that I wish to speak primarily—a subject close to my heart.

Just because a person writes music does not mean that he or she is a sacred cow or deserves special favors; but people who claim to be interested in music and do not know what is going on in the creative field deserve special condemnation in my opinion. Most of you, I assume, are not so historically minded that you wish to live primarily in the past. I speak with feeling since I spend hours daily surrounded by books written anywhere from one to five hundred years ago, other hours lecturing to New York University students on music of the past, and many an evening attending performances of nineteenth century opera at Broadway and 40th Street, not to mention late afternoons listening to conventional recital programs of Music League artists. The only thing that keeps me from going mad is getting away from all this and listening finally to music of my own time and place. Give me the twentieth century; give me today; give me the year 1948.

Some of us are lazy, acting as if intellectual work stopped after we left high school or college. We find it simpler to take the path of least

resistance and begrudge the mental effort that is required to listen to a contemporary work. How often have we heard, "When I go out in the evening, I want to relax and be amused. Why should I tax my mind in the evening when I have used it all day?" The answer to that attitude is: if democratic society is to continue, we cannot lie down and refuse to think. Liberty, to mention but one of our goals, is a constant struggle. In a dictatorship there is less thinking by the public, and if one of Mr. Shostakovich's symphonies is pronounced bad by Pravda, that is the last word. That is not the American way. We believe in intelligent public opinion and in an evolving, not a static, society. The forward-looking people in this country have always been curious and interested in innovation. We have had some splendid innovators: Poe and Whitman in poetry, Sousa and Gershwin in popular music, Charles Ives in more abstract musical thought. Personally I do not believe that our interest in contemporary composition should be confined to the atonal school. I like atonal music, and it has much in common with certain trends in present-day painting; however, there are other music styles that appeal to me and of course a broad interest in music must take in contemporary folklore and popular music. I enjoy all three types, and I do not think there is anything inconsistent in being fond of hillbilly, music hall, and Carnegie Hall programs.

Speaking to an audience representing the National Federation of Music Clubs makes me realize the

extent to which music has organized in this country. Your group has members in every state of the Union and can do a great deal to color public opinion. We know what the Book-of-the-Month Club has done for literature. It seems to me that with better organization more could be done for music. At present the managerial chains of concert artists and the advertising agencies for radio programs, not to mention the musicians union itself, have little interest in quality so far as contemporary composition is concerned. The interests of all three groups are economic rather than artistic or social. While I recognize the influence of economics in life, I believe there are cultural values quite as important to society. Music is one of the outstanding forces in life, as Plato knew and as the three groups mentioned above understand, but what are we doing to foster it intelligently? Amazingly little. Yet there is a lack of consistency in the attitude. If businessmen are so interested in improving hybrid corn and breeds of cattle, why not strains of music? How can we improve musical composition, you ask? Simply by listening to it, getting to know it, shaping an intelligent public opinion about it, and expending some mental effort in the process. The creator needs your reactions to his work; he must have them if there is to be a proper balance and logic to his pieces. Your task entails considerable responsibility.

Why is our music important? Do I talk as a chauvinist? It is important because music, in order to flourish

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The "Out-of-Town" Critic

CARL LINDSTROM

Managing Editor and Music Critic
Hartford (Conn.) Times



I CANNOT believe that there is any great difference between the state of culture in New York and in Hartford, Connecticut, Sedalia, Missouri, or Sacramento, California, if by culture we mean the acceptance of new music, experimental music, or the esoteric.

There seems to be a general fear of the new music regardless of whether it is foreign or American. If there is a greater acceptance of new foreign music than of new American music I think the answer is to be looked for in the scores themselves. It may be heresy to say so, but in my opinion the foreign contemporary composer is closer to his audience than is the American. He is not afraid of imagery in music—whether you call it descriptive or graphic or literary or, for that matter, romantic. W. J. Henderson said all music was romantic.

Except for ballet scores, American music is anything but graphic, and of course ballet music is necessarily choreographic.

It is unwise to be categorical about this, but by and large I think that the American composer is an ivory tower workman to a far greater extent than is the case abroad. It may be something more than a circumstance that most American composers are making their living on university faculties. This tends to give them the academic point of view.

It seems slightly ironical that in America, where the advertising arts have reached their finest flower—that is the arts of public relations, ballyhoo, or any other names you want to give the promotional urge—

the composer suffers the most for lack of advertising. Certainly, Russia, whose music in recent years has received the most attention, has outdone the United States completely in the art of promoting its composers.

To quote from an Associated Press dispatch of fairly recent date:

London, September 1—Dmitri Shostakovich, the Soviet composer, has written a *Festive Overture* dedicated to the 30th anniversary of Soviet power, which will be performed for the first time by the Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra, the Moscow radio said tonight.

"In this piece I sought to portray the feelings of people who went through grave war trials, who smashed the enemies of their homeland and who are now restoring their country," the composer was quoted as saying. "I have endeavored to embody in musical images the elan of peaceful labor."

Press Relations

In all my years in a newspaper office I have never seen any item remotely similar to that concerning a new composition by any American composer. Now whose fault is that? The composers', the newspapers', the wire services', such as the Associated Press or the United Press? I do not think so. Newspapers and news gathering organizations are much too busy just gathering news to go looking for free advertising and ballyhoo. A great deal of any news editor's time is consumed with straight-arming press agents.

One of the most conspicuously successful campaigns staged in recent years was turned loose on Shostakovich's *Seventh Symphony*. The subject matter was dramatized as

the Battle of Leningrad, and all this when the war was still on and interest was intense. The score was microfilmed and flown by fast plane halfway around the world. As a result of all this attention, publicity, if you will, or news, the world's leading conductors were fighting for the privilege of playing the symphony first. When three conductors of that caliber elbowed one another aside for the privilege of creating a premiere, the result was not ballyhoo; it was news!

But first the composer had to give the press agent something to get his teeth into, and what could be smarter—smart isn't the word for it; it was a stroke of genius—than for Shostakovich not simply to create a symphony but to dramatize it as the Battle of Leningrad at a time when that was what all the world was thinking about?

This is not a question of esthetics. Maybe this music is phony and the neglected American music is real, but the public is listening to one and does not seem to care to hear the other. So we are confronted with a condition and not a theory. It's going to take a whole lot more than all the music critics in the world—metropolitan and small city—to make over human nature, or even to make over the receptivity of the average human being to tonal images.

After a good many years of experience, I question the value of the small-town critic's sitting in on each and every home-town recital, or on the performances of local choruses and scholastic instrumental groups.

(Continued on page 58)

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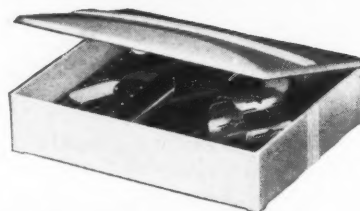
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The Music Teacher and New Music

BERNARD U. TAYLOR

Teacher of Singing, Juilliard School of Music

MY answer to the question "Is American music being given a fair hearing?" is a very emphatic "No!" American music has never received the recognition that it deserves, and it never will until all the institutions and individuals that are needed to give it a fair hearing join together and formulate a definite long-range plan, covering a period of years, that will be designed solely for the purpose of promoting American music.

These combined forces should include the composers, the librettists, the lyric writers, the publishers, the performers, the critics, the managers, the radio, the press, the music schools, the music clubs, the teachers, and every other agent that has a stake and a pride in American culture. As matters stand at the present time, all the above-mentioned agents do a lot of talking about what they have done or are doing in an individual way to promote American music, but unless they close ranks and present a united front with a definite, clear-cut, workable plan, the case is hopeless.

A plan of this kind, if it is to be successful, must be worked out with definite objectives in mind. The main objective, as I see it, is for all of us to realize that there is American music that should and must be heard, and that the only way it can obtain a satisfactory hearing is through a unified voluntary organization of the above-mentioned institutions. This voluntary organization should adopt a slogan which all will solemnly agree to uphold faithfully. This slogan might go something like this, "We Are Resolved to Do All in Our Power to Give American Music a Fair and Unbiased Hearing, Whenever and Wherever Possible."

Such a slogan would focus atten-



tion on the fact that there is music by American composers that deserves to be heard, and that these organized forces are determined that it shall be given a fair hearing. Also, such an organization and slogan would centralize all efforts now carried on by individuals and separate organizations, and would spotlight the whole "cause" as nothing else could. If enough of the right kind of publicity were given to such a slogan, in a comparatively short time it would become a great incentive to every person who believes in and lives for the day when American music will receive the recognition and respect which it deserves.

Plenty of people will say that such a plan is a fantastic dream; that it could never be brought to reality. Many will scoff at the idea of bringing together so many varied interests. Let me remind these doubters that in this great country of ours, absolutely *nothing* is impossible. All we need is to believe that such a procedure is just, and the only efficient way to handle this very important problem. All of us can and should contribute something to the

carrying out of such an enterprise. I mention below just two ways in which teachers could help.

1. Pressure can and should be brought to bear on the American teacher who has been European trained, and who has no interest in and feels no responsibility toward the young American students with whom he is in daily contact. These students rarely play or sing American music.

I include, too, in this group, the foreign-born teacher who is privileged to teach in this country, but who knows practically nothing of American music, and in most cases cares less. These teachers have a great influence on their immature students, too many of whom never hear anything about American music except scornful and derisive criticism. If the teacher happens to be French, he knows and teaches only French music. If he is German, it is only German music that he likes and with which he is familiar, and so on and on. Is it any wonder that many American students, surrounded during their formative and impressive years by this sort of influence, grow to maturity knowing absolutely nothing but music of the past. In my opinion, some serious thought should be given and some positive action taken to combat this pernicious influence in America.

2. The teacher's studio can be and should be a laboratory and workshop for the examination and appraisal of newly written compositions. The teacher can be an important point of liaison between the composer, the performer, the publisher, and the manager. All teachers should be as vitally interested in present-day American music as most of them are in so-called classical music, since it is their obligation to

(Continued on page 58)

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On Publishing New Music

ARTHUR A. HAUSER

Sales Manager and Educational Director,
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MAY I establish at the outset that, in this symposium, I am not a spokesman for any publisher or group of publishers. What I say will be based on my observations of policy concerning American music as usually practiced by most of the representative publishers of serious music in this country.

I believe that all American publishers are anxious to add the works of American composers to their catalogs. There is no doubt that, if he had to make a choice, the publisher would choose an American work in preference to any others, provided that all musical and commercial considerations were equal.

In a compilation listing new music of 67 American publishers of serious music, for the year 1946, there are 3656 different items, the greater portion being by American composers. This list does not cover all serious music issued in America last year, but it gives an indication of the amount of new American music that is made available to the public in printed form. It seems paradoxical that while we are touching on ways and means of publishing more music, the music dealers throughout the country are constantly shouting that they cannot absorb all the new music that is being published. I am inclined to think that there is some basis for their complaint.

Most American publishers set aside a portion of their budget for the publication of new serious music. They do this, I believe, as an indication of their faith in the future of the American composer rather than as a means to make

quick profits. But the number of manuscripts that any publisher can issue per annum is circumscribed by his resources, both financial and physical.

It should always be remembered that a publisher must make money to stay in business. The odds against the success of any new publication are tremendous. The publisher knows from experience, however, that certain types of music, which he classifies as "commercial," are less risky as investments than music he classifies as "prestige." He, therefore, must issue sufficient "commercial" music to cover his overhead and show a reasonable profit if he is to have the funds necessary for publishing "prestige" music.

It is not simple to draw a sharp line between "commercial" and "prestige" music, for occasionally a publication originally considered "prestige" turns out to be financially successful. With a product whose reception by the public is so unpredictable, it is perhaps prudent to generalize rather than be specific. Therefore, I have used the term "commercial" to describe music that falls into a class that has a large potential market, and "prestige" for music that has a small potential market—so small that the publisher cannot hope to break even on his investment.

Evaluating Manuscripts

There are many considerations that must be taken into account in judging a new manuscript. I am certain that every musician will agree that the most important considera-

tion must be with regard to the musical value of the composition. It must be musically correct and it should have esthetic value regardless of its form. It should add something to the literature of its class and should appeal to a large group of listeners rather than to a small one. Let us clarify this last statement by saying that a publisher might consider that a sonata or concerto for bassoon would have some appeal, even from the commercial angle, but that he would hesitate to look a second time at a concerto grosso for bassoon, contra bassoon and tuba, or at a divertimento for four bassoons. Yet manuscripts for such unusual combinations are constantly finding their way to editorial departments. Writing for odd groups of instruments undoubtedly is good training for the young composer, and on the rare occasions when these works can be performed they might prove to be highly entertaining or interesting, but they definitely are not suitable material for publishing. The composer should do his experimentation for the purpose of perfecting his skill and his inspiration with no thought of seeing the experiment in print. It is true, as one editor told a talented young composer, that reams of manuscript paper must be spoiled if a good piece of music is to appear eventually.

A symphonic work presents a very real financial problem to the composer and to the publisher. In order to submit the full score to all important conductors in the first season of its appearance, it is necessary

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THE MUSIC JOURNAL
Contemporary Composers Series

Virgil Thomson



Toward Organized Effort

ALFRED HUMAN

Editor-in-Chief, *The Musical Digest*

IN order to function, the composer must have intelligent understanding, intelligent sympathy. He can cling to his art on a crust, but deny him intelligent communion with his contemporary world, which means performance, and his gifts may wither, or worse, may become warped. Then we have on our hands not a one-man frustration, an individual failure, but the making of a social tragedy in which all of us share the penalty. For the well-being, the spiritual vitality of our community of lives, depends on the degree of intelligent understanding given to that very small group, our cultural leaders—the creative minority, the carriers of the light. Indeed, it is fascinating to know that our historians and scientists, including Arnold Toynbee, agree that all civilizations on earth rise and fall, flourish and crumble, in direct ratio to the degree of recognition given to the cultural vanguard. The American composer, then, becomes a symbol of our responsibility to the creative minority. Naturally I have a suggestion for the salvaging of our composers, and at least some of our civilization. If it has any merit it is because it was conceived by people who know the ways of composers and conductors, who have lived for years on the firing line of music.

As I listen to the words of those gathered at this Forum, I feel new hope in my heart that you, the leaders of the National Federation of Music Clubs, are alive to the meaning of this hour—an hour when great forces count as their first prize the creative artist; when they strive to make musicians and music mere

munitions of war—weapons of offense and defense. Our own statesmen as yet seem to be naively indifferent to the terrific potency of this kind of cultural warfare. I think we can place reliance on you, as realists, as representatives of the amateurs and the music lovers, as well as the professional musician.

When I say that you are realists, being women, I recall a story of an able minister in a little near-by town—an overworked, uncomplaining soul. One morning a committee of the church came to his home to place a few more burdens and complaints on this mild man of God. They knocked and knocked. Finally, the very small daughter of the house opened the door.

"Mary," inquired the chairman of the committee, "where is your father, and why were we kept waiting?" The little girl explained. "Last night father received a call from a big church in the big city, and he has been up in his study all night praying and wrestling with himself to make up his mind whether he should accept."

"Indeed. Then please ask your mother to see us immediately." "No," replied the child, "Mother can't come either. She is down in the cellar packing up, for tomorrow we are all moving to the big city."

Federation Initiative

I hope that you, realists of the musical family, will take the initiative in setting up a new kind of group within your Federation. Why you? Because without you, the intelligent amateur and patron, the

professional musician is helpless—as you are helpless without him. Together, you will be irresistible.

We need a central clearing house, an institution for the advancement of creative music, a permanent group to receive, study, appraise, and circulate compositions in the larger forms—an institution dedicated to performance. I can only sketch here the working plan.

We already possess the nucleus of this institution in our existing organizations, and out of these existing groups can be assembled a national board of composers, conductors, critics, publishers, radio, motion picture, and recording representatives, and ASCAP—particularly ASCAP, that tremendously useful collection agency and legal bureau.

The initial step will be the creation of a small, highly skilled jury that will be backed by musical authority, cultural prestige, and the moral might of your coordinated organizations.

This jury will set up a library of works obtained from all available sources. Then the real task of the jury will begin—that of approaching the conductors, the music directors of the nation, for performance. Here you may meet with some resistance from certain adored conductors and opera directors, perhaps a manager or two—men who seem to cling fast to the philosophy that our country is simply a vast filling station for their profit. Eventually every conductor, I believe, will have full confidence in any score submitted for performance under the "seal of merit" of the hypothetical insti-

(Continued on page 54)

The Manager's Viewpoint

MARKS LEVINE

Vice-president, National Concert and Artists' Corporation



IT is my well-considered opinion that managers should meddle as little as possible with the purely musical and artistic phases of their profession. The best a manager can do is to guide the professional lives and careers of his artists, to help local auspices who handle musical events, to assist new organizations in their initial steps toward a fully realized life of musical culture. The choice of music lies with the performer; the evaluation of music lies with the critic; the creation of new music lies with the composer; the dissemination of new music lies with everybody and certainly with the music publisher.

But I am not only a manager. I am also a music listener, a concert-goer, and, wonder of wonders, I may also be a music-lover. And above all I am an American and perforce should be interested in everything and anything that contributes to a full cultural life in America. Without music and a continuous musical development, a full cultural life is unthinkable. I want to emphasize the fact that my opinions stem from such general qualifications and are colored by a managerial attitude only to the extent that I have heard and managed thousands of concerts by hundreds of artists, in almost every nook and corner of the world.

Having read the outline of the entire symposium, I was struck by the unmistakable premise running through the entire paper; namely, that so-called American music is being neglected by American performers. My first reaction to that is that I cannot think of music as being American, or German, or French, or

whatever else. Trite as it may sound, music must be and in fact is international in its nature, universal in its scope and appeal. One cannot for a moment imagine that Beethoven's *Fifth Symphony* is German music or that Debussy's *La Mer* is French music or that Verdi's *Othello* is Italian music. How could anyone classify Rachmaninoff's symphonic poem *The Bells*? Is it Russian music because it was written by a Russian? Or is it American music because it was inspired by a poem from the pen of an American poet? Is the *New World Symphony* of Dvorak American or Czechoslovakian music?

Classifications

Even music based on folk themes, such as many works of Tschaikowsky, or based on a national saga, such as many works of Wagner, or based on a propaganda appeal, such as works of Shostakovich, runs away from the composer's intent or inspiration and eventually becomes international property, provided, of course, that it is great music and can stand the test of time. We have all seen only too recently the sorry spectacle of an attempt to label Mendelssohn and Meyerbeer as Jewish composers.

We come, therefore, to the proposition that we can classify music only as great or insignificant, inspired or labored, good or bad, whether written by an American, a Frenchman, an Italian, or a New Zealand Maori. If you will accept this proposition of mine, then I claim that music written by Americans is not denied a fair hearing in our concert halls.

As a manager I have the proof. Through my office flow hundreds of programs every season to every city in this country and to many other parts of the world. I would say that 25 per cent of all vocal programs is devoted to songs written by Americans (and I exclude from this estimate Negro spirituals). My estimate can be verified by such artists as LaForge, Ernest Charles, Swarthout, Clara Edwards, McGimsey, Sacco, Eakin, Albert Hay Malotte, the late Mrs. Beach, and other successful American song writers. And this is all the more remarkable, because if we begin with Stephen Foster, who wrote most of his songs around 1850, we realize music written by Americans is only a hundred years old, so that it is really contemporary music and should be judged on the basis of contemporary music the world over. How can we possibly compare ourselves to an era of Schubert, who died in 1822, or Schumann, who died in 1856. Centuries of musical heritage still alive had blossomed before we even became a nation. So much for songs.

When it comes to symphonic music, I must say that our conductors and orchestras take extra pains to give a hearing to symphonic works written by Americans. Deems Taylor, Barber, Copland, Schumann (William, not Robert), Diamond, Martinu, Sessions, Virgil Thomson, Freed can testify to that. And even our operatic stage tries to give a hearing to works by Americans. Just take a look at Menotti, not to mention Taylor again and some others. This is all the more remarkable be-

(Continued on page 56)



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Creating Interest in New American Music

FREDERICK JACOBI

Composer, Teacher of Composition, Juilliard School of Music

HOW can the National Federation of Music Clubs create and further interest in the American composer and his works? That is a provocative question, but not easy to answer in view of the fact that the NFMC is already doing such fine things in this direction. Some of you might answer, to almost anything that I might suggest, that you are already doing just that. Much more American music is being taught and performed now than was the case even a few years ago, and some of this advance may well be attributed to the admirable efforts of the NFMC.

But a few random thoughts from the standpoint of the composer might, nevertheless, not be amiss.

We composers of today are in some respects distinctly up against it. Our greatest competitors are, of course, Bach, Mozart, and Beethoven, to say nothing of Chopin, Schumann, and Wagner. This backlog of great and glorious music almost crowds the modern composer out of a place in the sun. Bach, Mozart, and Beethoven did not have to face this competition, for music before their time was not quite so firmly entrenched nor was it, I believe, quite so marvelous. The glories of Palestrina and Orlando di Lasso had been almost forgotten by the time Bach came on the scene. Music, we know, is on the whole the most conservative of all the arts: people like most to hear that which is most familiar. And it is inevitable that our concerts, like our conservatories, should be primarily depositories for the wonders of our musical past. Our teachers, our concert artists, our recording companies, and our radio sponsors will, I hope and trust, see to it that the so-called classics will never sink into oblivion as did the great polyphonic school of an earlier



period. Indeed, they are doing a great deal to revive today an interest in the earlier music, almost forgotten a hundred years ago.

Still, our eyes must be fixed on the future and we must realize that we are going to be judged, not so much by the performances of our practising musicians, admirable as many of these may be, as by the additions, if any, which we have made to the store of human culture and happiness. I am sure that I am not alone in thinking that we of today are giving too much attention to the performer and not enough to the composer.

And we composers have, I believe, made efforts to meet the people for whom we are writing. Gone, to a great extent is the attitude of even a few years ago, that unintelligibility is itself an asset: that composers must make themselves hard, rather than easy, to understand. I think there has been a fortunate reaction against this unhealthy, ivory-tower frame of mind. We realize now that all great art is in essence simple and direct, and that any unnecessary complications in our product indicate failure in our moral obligation

toward our public, which is to speak to them as clearly and as simply as possible—as man to man. The period of experimentation (though experimentation is, in itself, a healthy thing) seems temporarily to be over, and I believe that we shall see that those of the generation just past who will survive are precisely those who have said as clearly and as definitely as possible that which they had to say. Schoenberg, still perhaps the most disputed among contemporary composers, will survive only if the future finds his message strong, direct, and clear.

Gone too, I believe, is that attitude on the part of the composers that they must necessarily be “in the swim” as far as an apparent and obvious sense of “modernity” is concerned. The artist is an individual, and if he is to express himself it must be in his own way. How fortunate, for example, that Emily Dickinson did not think that she had to express herself in the way Walt Whitman did! They were two different people and they expressed themselves in two very different ways.

Waning too, I believe, is the overstraining toward a nationalistic music—music which, above all things, must be “American.” We realize today that if a composer expresses himself sincerely, profoundly, and well (for the standard of workmanship must be high) and if he is an American living in America, his music will in some sense inevitably be American and of today.

The public must learn to judge him critically and for himself; there must be less reliance on the opinions of the critics, astute as many of these may be. The critics are, after all, only human beings like ourselves and they assert, as one of them re-

(Continued on page 51)

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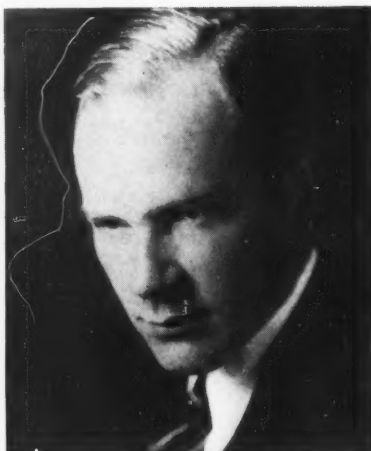
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Composers and the Public

OTTO LUENING

Composer, Director of Columbia University Opera Workshop



IN this country the composer of serious music has one constant problem and that is to bring himself into closer contact with the musical world around him. His colleagues who write entertainment music for immediate use need not worry, but the position of the serious composer needs to be clarified. To draw a parallel with the sciences, he is to the musical world (or the music industry, if you like) what the research scientist is to the so-called practical world. Without his experiments, his teaching, his good, bad, or indifferent compositions there would soon be no musical life, for eventually music of the past is forgotten, no matter how good it is. And let us bear in mind that the great masters of the past were once contemporary composers—with problems like ours. In the United States we all know what soil erosion is, but do we know that there is such a thing as cultural erosion?

There has been a great deal of talk about the problem of bringing the present-day serious composer

into closer contact with the musical world but the fact remains that his music is known to a relatively small group. Possibly this condition could be changed.

Every composer is interested in his own work and perhaps even in the compositions of a small group of like-minded colleagues, but do composers study the field as a whole in an effort to widen their horizons? Are they in a position, when their own work is not suitable, to suggest other American works to performers, to give a lift to the young or to strengthen the position of a colleague? In exceptional cases only. When it becomes necessary to go beyond their particular organizational allegiances or personal aesthetics for the greater good of American music, do they do this? They are learning, but they have a long way to go.

The thousands of private music teachers in America are in a strategic position to do their bit for new works, but this means keeping in touch with all new publications, with composers who have works in manuscript, and with all other agencies that can provide such works. Only a few teachers take the trouble to do this, so the same old pieces are taught in the same way. Students and parents would welcome a change.

The high schools, colleges, and universities in America have music departments which enroll vast numbers of students. Is a fair amount of representative American music used in the regular courses year in and year out? Probably not.

There is a library in almost every town in the land. If they have music departments at all, do these include at least a small representative collection of American works?

Conductors are busy people, so it was suggested some years ago that reading committees be established to study American works and recommend the most suitable ones to conductors for their consideration. Some half-hearted attempts were made, but the results were meager. Performers as a group are likely to overestimate the power of the familiar. By playing only well-known works they put themselves into competition with every artist before them who has played the same pieces. Sometimes they are successful but often not. If their programs were interspersed with several interesting American compositions, perhaps even the old masterpieces would take on new life. If this is to be achieved, time must be spent in searching for compositions, both published and in manuscript. This will necessitate as much effort as is spent on reworking old compositions.

Critics, it has been said, actually welcome novelties (perhaps out of sheer boredom), and on the whole their criticisms have been carefully weighed. But have they realized that their great power, aside from reporting, lies in being the interpreters and mediators of the contemporary American music scene?

Managers are a much-abused lot. Their job is to manage—to buy and sell artists. Their function is neither to educate nor to propagandize American music. They try to guess what the public wants and then try to supply it. Should the public want American music, they would be happy to supply that.

The public has been friendly to American composers, but a more active position could bring about great changes. If, by letter and word of mouth, members of the musical public would let it be known to conductors, performers, managers, teachers, radio stations, and recording companies that they want American compositions to be given more frequent performance, it will happen. If the public is not sure whether it likes American music, the only way to find out is to hear the music not once, but often. Then we might expect a natural process of selection and rejection to take place. With such cooperation between the composer and the public, we can hope for a music as sprawling, exciting, and grand as our country itself.

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AFM — School Code

Announcement of an important move toward
much-needed betterment of educational and
professional music relations.

AT a meeting of the Executive Committee and Administrative Council of the Music Educators National Conference in Chicago, September 22, a statement of principles and practice pertaining to the relationship of professional musicians, music educators, and students was officially signed by the presidents of the American Federation of Musicians, the Music Educators National Conference, and the American Association of School Administrators. The principles agreed upon are covered in general in the following statement jointly released:

1. That as a matter of long-standing policy the MENC encourages public appearances of student groups for educational purposes or community services, but in no capacity not strictly within the realm of such purposes or services, and under no circumstances when such performances interfere with the employment of professional musicians.

2. That the American Federation of Musicians, which includes in its membership many music educators, desires to cooperate in every way possible with the field of music education and does not desire to handicap the essential educational activities and community services of school music departments.

3. That copies of the code agreed upon will be distributed by President Petrillo to the heads of all locals and other officers of the American Federation of Musicians, and that similar distribution will be made through the official channels of AASA and MENC, the latter including mailing to principal officers of all local, state, division and national units.

4. That every effort will be made to secure the cooperation of music educators, professional musicians,

and the press in carrying out the spirit and principles of the code with the understanding that the joint committee, representing MENC, AASA, and AF of M, will convene again after a period of one year to review the results to date and to take such further steps as may be advisable in continuing and extending the mutual understanding and cooperative relationship.

"The Music Educators National Conference is the music department of the National Education Association, and collaboration in this development with the AASA, representing the school administrators, is a logical, even necessary, procedure," stated C. V. Buttelman, executive secretary of the MENC. "While major responsibility in connection with the operation of the code from the standpoint of the schools rests upon the music teachers and directors of school musical organizations, the support and guidance of the administrators must be assured. We are, therefore, grateful to the executive committee of AASA and to President Hunt and Dr. Lemmel for their participation in the discussion and in the final action. Generally speaking, throughout the United States members of the music education profession have always had most cordial and cooperative relationships with the musicians' unions. Yet, in spite of the satisfactory situation which is found in the average community where there is a musicians' union, misunderstandings seem to have been abroad leading the people of one community to think that there must be difficulties or less satisfactory conditions in other communities. Press stories, rumors, and word of mouth relays have caused misinterpretations or misunderstandings. Really, about all that the code does

is to set forth in rather simple terms tenets upon which have been based the long-time misunderstandings and sympathy in nearly all communities where professional musicians, professional music educators, and school music students are all contributing to the educational, musical, cultural life."

Following is the code adopted at the Chicago meeting.

A CODE OF ETHICS

AS ADOPTED JOINTLY BY THE MUSIC EDUCATORS NATIONAL CONFERENCE AND THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF MUSICIANS AND APPROVED BY THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

The competition of school bands and orchestras has in the past years been a matter of great concern and, at times, even hardship to the professional musicians.

The music educators and the professional musicians are alike concerned with the general acceptance of music as a desirable factor in the social and cultural growth of our country. The music educators contribute to this end by fostering the study of music among the children of the country and by developing a keen interest in better music among the masses. The professional musicians strive to improve musical taste by providing increasingly artistic performances of worth-while music.

This unanimity of purpose is further exemplified by the fact that a great many professional musicians are music educators and a great many music educators are, or have been, actively engaged in the field of professional performances.

The members of high school symphonic orchestras and bands look to the professional organizations for example and inspiration; they become active patrons of music in later life. They are not content to listen to twelve-piece ensembles when an orchestra of symphonic proportions is necessary to give adequate performance to the music. These former music students, through their influence on sponsors, employers, and program makers in demanding adequate musical performances, have a beneficial effect upon the prestige and economic status of the professional musicians.

(Continued on page 59)

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Christmas Singing

HELEN TRAUBEL

Miss Traubel, dramatic soprano of the Metropolitan Opera Association, tells why she enjoys her part in keeping alive the tradition of Christmas carols.

FOR the past six years I have appeared as soloist on the Telephone Hour radio program on the Monday evening preceding Christmas Day. I sometimes like to think of these annual broadcasts as the modern counterpart of the old Wait singers, who sang carols from house to house in England.

For some, the phrase "old-fashioned Christmas" connotes a sleigh ride and Christmas trees and Santa Claus; for others the words bring to mind the calendar art—Christmas cards picturing a group of carolers standing in the snow outside a house in the English countryside doing their share to spread peace on earth, good will to men.

Since my life has always been concerned with music, I fall into the latter category when I hear the words "old-fashioned Christmas." And I like to think that I am helping to carry on the tradition of the Waits in singing Christmas carols over the radio, for figuratively we, too, go from house to house singing our songs when we're heard through the loudspeaker.

So secure is the place of music in our Christmas festivities that it seems incredible that it was not used to celebrate the birth of Christ until 1223. Often the origins of folk customs are only vaguely determined, but this date is singularly exact, owing to the fact that it was in that year that St. Francis of Assisi built a crèche in which was re-enacted the Nativity, while church friars stood by singing songs about the birth of Christ—the first Christmas carols to be sung since the angels sang at Bethlehem.

Originally the carol was a song accompanying a ring dance performed to music. Like many of our Christmas customs, it is closely linked to various pagan traditions, taking part of its character from the old Saxon custom of the wassail feast. In England, to this day, the strolling singers of Yuletide carry a wassail bowl filled with wine which they offer in exchange for gifts.

The word carol drifted to England first at the time of the Norman Conquest. Then came the adaptation of this dancing song to a song in praise of the birth of Christ. Gradually the music was used increasingly in production of the miracle and passion plays of the time, with the church fathers and the participants in these plays from the lives of the saints and the life of Christ developing many of the original versions of some of the carols we now sing. In fact, some of today's carols are founded completely on legend, having been passed down from generation to generation purely through memory. The oldest written one dates from the thirteenth century and is preserved in the British Museum.

Tradition through Folkways

Our Christmas carols are a fascinating example of the gradual adaptation of customs, the steady change of tradition as it drifts down through folkways. Although the carol is now associated almost exclusively with Christmas music, there are summer and Easter carols sung in Wales. The French *noel*, often identified with the English

carol, has always been concerned specifically with the Nativity rather than being a Christian adaptation of a pagan dancing song. Our most popular carol, *Silent Night, Holy Night*, is one of the most recent creations of all, dating back less than one hundred and fifty years.

After I have sung my radio program of Christmas songs of praise and joy each year, driving home through the gay streets of Manhattan all decked in holly and red and green ribbons and lighted trees, I feel a little sorry that I cannot make more personal contact with all these people who are celebrating the season with me. Although the radio has brought me, as a Christmas Wait, into millions of more homes than a real Wait in the Middle Ages could even have imagined, I think that might have been jolly for a caroler then, intimately sharing this friendly music with his neighbors.

For that is one of the main beauties of the carol. It is a song for people singing together and sharing a simple, mutual emotion. These are melodies to be sung at a session when all are conscious of the need for good will among men, and the folksongs, in whose heritage and singing we share, express this consciousness. For many carols are not only lovely in themselves; they are the history behind us and they make echoes of recognition, of association, of a common past and future. Such songs, and not only the dearly loved and familiar ones, are in our bones. When I sing them each Christmastide I feel that sense of continuity that gives roots to our civilization.

The Piano Prodigy

SASCHA GORODNITZKI

An eminent pianist and teacher discusses the problems of the young performer in relation to the important question of when to make a formal public debut.



PRIOR to World War I there was a song whose lyrics protested, "I didn't raise my boy to be a soldier." This article has nothing to do with the war, but I strongly advise parents of musically talented youngsters to paraphrase that sentence to read, "I didn't raise my child to be a piano prodigy."

Don't misunderstand me. I think it is fine for youngsters to show a deep interest in music, but I do not believe it is a good thing at all for this interest, this budding ability, to be exploited too soon. A certain amount of public performance is necessary for the development of a talented child, but in too many cases the parents of such children push them onward before they are really ready.

Believing that every mature artist should do a certain amount of teaching in order to pass on to the younger generation the fine traditions of his profession that have been handed down to him, I have, in my own past teaching experience, had ample opportunity to view both the talented child and his parents, and this is what I have observed.

Most prodigies are imitative and usually, even in the case of the greatest talent, reflect only the ideas and training of the teacher. This is only natural. In his short span, the child has been so busy absorbing skill that he has not had the time to impress his own personality on his production of the music or to probe the intent of the composer. So, the child does the next best thing—he imitates his teacher.

Most parents of prodigies are blinded by technical skill and be-

lieve that mere facility at the keyboard is enough to warrant a debut and a round of engagements. Youth being appealing in its own right, there will always be plenty of people to buy tickets for concerts by such youthful performers and for a short period there may be a fine monetary return.

But inevitably the child grows older. Then what? Alas, history has shown that the successful development of prodigies to maturity as artists has been the exception rather than the rule. All too often, critics have said of these prodigies something to the effect that their reading as a child seemed mature compared to their childish presentation now that they had attained adulthood. The reason for this appears to be a case of arrested development. They never fulfilled their earlier promise with the sort of performance that is judged by adult standards without the surrounding golden aura of childhood.

Time for Debut?

The question then arises, when is it best for a young performer to appear in formal public concert? There can be no set timetable for this, for it could differ with each individual. The best way to set the right time for such public performance is when, after much artistic searching, it is certain that (a) there are already definite signs of the development of an individual and personal style, and (b) the child has already learned a considerable portion of the literature of his instrument.

The development of individual

style argues well for the young artist, because it means that he is ready to throw off the protective cloak of his mentors and to emerge from his chrysalis as an entity. Then, by having a good backlog of the literature of his instrument at his fingertips, the young artist avoids the pitfall of "first year raves, second year sorrow." For again, in his eagerness to get a public hearing the youngster fails to look beyond the immediate need. Thus, the first program is prepared with care and consists of pieces fairly well assimilated, while the second program is usually prepared in haste. The young artist should have several programs and several concerti thoroughly mastered before undertaking his debut. The fact that the young artist has successfully assimilated so much of the literature of his instrument means that he has musical integrity and the desire to probe beneath the surface of the obvious. That is all to the good.

There is really no reason why young talent should be in such an all-fired hurry to get a public hearing before they have had thorough preparation. For at no time in the history of music in America has there been such an opportunity for them to gain prestige. In the past few years numerous prizes and competitions have been established to provide a hearing for these future greats who have good musical roots and not mere surface bloom. These include the Schubert Memorial Prize, the Philadelphia Young Artists Award, Town Hall Endowment Award, Naumburg Prize, Leventritt

(Continued on page 59)

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The Singer and New Music

DONALD DAME

A brilliant young tenor champions the cause of the unknown composer of art songs and gives practical suggestions for discovering and promoting him and his work.



RECENTLY I received through the mail a manuscript of a song by an unknown composer. First reading showed that it had the makings of a very fine concert piece. Singing it confirmed my first thought—with a very little reworking, it would make a very acceptable addition to my concert repertoire.

I immediately got in touch with the composer and asked him to come in to see me. He was a young man who was making a living as a music teacher and doing his composing on the side. He understood the suggestions I made, agreed to rework the piece along those lines, and when he returned the song I found it exactly right in every respect. It will be featured during my 1947-48 concert tour.

This particular incident had a very happy ending. Many others, however, have not turned out so well.

In my mail every day come numerous manuscripts of concert songs. Many of them have fine possibilities, but lack just that little something

which can turn an amateurish effort into a finished professional work. Over the years, I have talked to many composers of such pieces, and invariably the story is the same: the majority of these people are either self-taught or have had only the barest instruction in composition. Much of their effort shows imagination but a decided lack of technical skill to make a proper setting for a good poem. And the reason they lack the technical skill is that the business of making a living takes up so much of their time that they have very little time to study. Several of my constant contributors are music teachers, and one is a housewife in Rochester who, as a result of my constant prodding, has finally begun to study at the Conservatory there.

One composer I talked to pointed out that, even after he had acquired technical skill, his chances of being able to get a serious song published—to say nothing of being able to make a living in the field—were extremely limited because serious music as a whole has such a limited market compared with the output of Tin Pan Alley. I had to agree with him.

The question now is, what shall be done?

One answer would be to make the rewards in the serious music field a lot more interesting. I know composers who have taken their works to publishers who turned them down with the explanation that their songs were not the sort that artists would use. I have found many of these pieces very usable, and judging from audience reaction the public has liked them too.

Another answer would be to have some sort of national theater in which the unknown composer might

get a hearing. There are so many gifted people in the country who have a fine feeling for music, but lack the know-how to carry out these ideas. It seems to me that their talent is part of the assets of the country, just like our other wonderful natural resources, and it is up to us to see to it that these assets are not lost just because the composers themselves do not know how to make the most of what they have.

Looking over the manuscripts that have been submitted to me, I find that composers are writing more melodically these days. Very possibly this is a reaction from the modern dissonant treatment that was so much in vogue during the war. In their writing, they are using the modern idiom to enhance melody rather than detract from it.

Getting a good song to sing is very decidedly to the artist's advantage. That is why I spend a great deal of time going over manuscripts submitted to me, and, if I think they have any possibilities at all, I try to get the composers to whip them into shape. I am happy to have been instrumental in pointing out the possibilities of some of these songs to publishers, who have accepted them for publication. Very often the composers have wanted me to have a share of their royalties. I have consistently refused any such arrangement, because I feel that being instrumental in having a good song published is sufficient reward and is part of my debt to music.

Concert artists know so well how difficult it is to get really good new material, that we have a sort of informal exchange among ourselves whereby we share our song "finds" with one another.

My experience with composers has been echoed by practically every one of my colleagues in the concert field. In a four-year period I personally have introduced the works of ten composers who had not been able to get a hearing with publishers, and since audiences have applauded these new works enthusiastically, it seems that the performer is in a better position than the publishers to judge the public's likes and dislikes.

What do you say, Mr. Publisher? Are you doing your utmost to encourage new composers?

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RALPH L. THOMPSON

The sales manager of the band instrument division of C. G. Conn, Ltd. reports on student interest and participation in the Creative Music Awards contest.

HOW did you first become interested in composing music? Where and how did you learn about the Creative Music Awards contest sponsored by Scholastic Magazines? Do your school officials encourage participation in such competition? Do any of the music dealers in your town help to promote participation in these contests.

The above questions were asked of the winners of first, second, and third prizes in four classifications of the 1947 Scholastic Magazines music writing competition, conducted for the past few years by Scholastic Magazines, with the cooperation of the Music Educators National Conference. The classifications were: composition for any solo instrument with piano accompaniment; composition for not more than six instruments; composition for more than six instruments (orchestra); and composition for band.

The purpose of the questions was to find out whether, given some sincere encouragement, junior and senior high school music students would respond to the challenge of such competition and thus help fill the need for original music composition, especially the type of composition suitable for use by high school instrumental groups. Comment from the student prize winners seemed to indicate that, with even a minimum of genuine encouragement and well outlined plans by school administrators, music directors, music stores, and other possible sponsors, there would be enough competition to make the goals set up by originators of the contests far too limited.

Support for this contention might be summed up in the clipped com-

ment of the winner of first prize in composition for orchestra, a New York state high school boy, who described the situation in his school community by saying, "The creation of music is neither encouraged nor discouraged in my town. It is simply ignored." He continued, "From the minute I became interested in music and later started studying the piano, I always looked at it (music) from a creator's point of view and it has never occurred to me in any other light. But as far as the science of composition goes, I am in almost complete ignorance. What little I do know I have 'discovered' on a hit-or-miss basis." This sixteen-year-old lad's active interest in music dates back to 1943 when his father, a rural minister, was able to acquire for his family a record player with "a few albums of Bach and one of Beethoven. Because of these albums I became a confirmed lover of serious music over night," he wrote, adding this comment, "In the last few years I have been able to widen my musical horizon until now I can enjoy Stravinsky and Purcell with equal ease and understanding."

In a quite different situation was a boy living in Detroit. He, a prize winner in several classifications two years in succession, said that he had always enjoyed music, "especially the type of classical music that has real feeling as opposed to mechanical perfection," and that he "had always wanted to write music." This boy was fortunate enough to receive instruction in fundamentals at a boarding school for boys when he was only fourteen. He also attended one summer session at Interlochen National Music Camp and later

studied composition and counterpoint in Detroit. "This fall I expect to enter the Eastman School of Music to major in composition," he commented. Regarding the worth of the contests he said, "I think they are stimulating and very beneficial because they encourage a student to try to prove his ability to himself, his family and friends; and the actual winning of contests like this gives a person some added confidence, too."

"I first heard about the Scholastic Awards from the magazine itself . . . neither the high school nor the local music dealer encourages participation as yet," said a Connecticut winner. "In fact, our high school has had a full-time music director for only one year. I, however, have played clarinet for eight years, piano for three, and am now taking up oboe. I have never had any formal training in theory or composition."

Betting on Composition

A Cleveland boy related that he started composing music because of a wager; he boasted he could write an orchestral number and his friends said he couldn't. So he did compose such a piece, showing it to his Music Settlement piano teacher, who recognized its possibilities and in turn showed it to the Settlement director. The director was then instrumental in getting the "bet winner" a scholarship in composition with a chance to study under a well-known Cleveland composer. After one and one-half years of study the boy had completed several choral numbers, a suite for three clarinets, various ensembles, and "a few orchestral numbers." The director of vocal music in the junior high school the Cleveland student attended called his attention to the 1947 Scholastics-sponsored competition by giving him one of the folders. "Unfortunately I wasn't able to complete my best number in time for this contest," the boy explained. "As I am the only one in our school who writes music, I don't know how much the school officials encourage it," he stated, concluding with the observation, "It seems to me that all school music today has to do with playing, while the theoretical part of music is forgotten. Several of my

(Continued on page 52)

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Alice Blue Gown	March Of The Mannikins	American Patrol	Battle Hymn Of The Republic
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Hawaiian War Chant	The Rogue Song	The Marine's Hymn	Where Do We Go From Here?
I'll See You In My Dreams	Temptation	I Hear America Singing	When You Were A Tulip
and 9 others			

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singularly unaware of church music, and after wondering a long time about why this is so I have come to the conclusion that it is because of the self-isolation of our various congregations. Members of one church rarely visit another and practically never attend services of a different faith. Shyness, apathy, and fear prevent individuals from visiting other churches, although such visitors are always welcome.

Everyone who is interested in music might take into consideration this great wealth of music that is theirs for the asking. Some of the more famous church choirs already have their share of visitors, it is true, at Christmas and Easter and Passover, and some attend the camp meetings and revivals outside of the cities, but these visitors are only a very small percentage of those who would, I believe, discover many new and worth-while musical experiences through such inter-faith visits. While the singing naturally differs in quality, as well as type, there is a fine unanimity of approach in which sincerity and devotion are the great factors.

A glance at the histories of religion and music will show how closely they have been allied and how many of the advances of music and the techniques of modern composition originated because of the needs of the church. On the other hand, the growth of music appreciation in the United States during the past few years has led to the expansion of music programs in our ecclesiastical organizations. Until recently, the minister usually was musical director of his church, but now many of the larger churches have specially trained, full-time choirmasters hired to train the chorus and organize its activities.

WHEN I was five, my parents took me on a trip to their native Italy. I know that I was introduced to relatives, that I was shown my mother's home and my father's art work in the churches, but there are really only two things I remember about that journey—the deep vastness of the sea around the ship and the wonderful singing of the choirs in Rome.

I think the strangeness of my surroundings, the religious atmosphere of the city, and my excitement gave the beauty of the singing an added spiritual quality, and ever since I have been particularly fond of choral music.

Probably most people have had some such experience. Here in America there is a wide variety of choral music to listen to because of the diversity of religion, locality, and temperament. All can participate in psalms, spirituals, oratorios, and choir singing. What puzzles me is the number of people who don't; the many who are deaf to the possibilities. A large proportion of those who like opera and symphony are

One of the big milestones in this development was the first visit to America, in 1919, of the Vatican Choir, which has just returned to these shores on another concert tour. The success of the Choir's first visit inspired a similar tour by St. Olaf's Choir. The latter group led to the formation of a small chorus in Dayton, Ohio, which grew up into the Dayton Choir and the famous Westminster Choir School. Now, of course, there is a great deal of activity in churches all over the country, with some churches (for example St. Thomas', in New York) combining choir school with academic training and giving special musical performances, of even the most complicated and magnificent oratorios.

Church Interchange

My feeling that more people ought to attend these services is fortified, perhaps, by the fact that the choirs of the different churches often interchange performances. The members of the Russian Orthodox Cathedral, for example, visited St. Peter's Episcopal Church to sing the Russian Service of Great Vespers, and St. Thomas' Boys' Choir sang at Temple Emanuel, whose own chorus sang Sephardic works on the same program. Sometimes choruses that are not necessarily affiliated with any religious group sing on ecclesiastical programs, as when the Bach Choir of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, visited the Cathedral of St. John the Divine and the Cantata Singers sang the Passion according to St. John at All Souls' Church. In 1946, three notable groups presented a Music of the Faiths concert at Town Hall, New York. The participants were the choirs of Union Theological Seminary, Pius X School of Liturgical Music of the Manhattanville College of the Sacred Heart, and the Jewish Institute of Religion.

But religious music does not have to be performed by costly choirs. Sometimes the most inspiring results are achieved by an unpaid chorus in a small town. Dignity and reverence, whether the music is in prayer, praise, or penitence, is essential to fine church music, and sometimes simplicity achieves this better than an elaborate organization.

Of course, singers often partici-

(Continued on page 58)

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James A. Bland — America's Most Neglected Composer

CHARLES HAYWOOD

The story of the composer of *Carry Me Back to Old Virginy* is told here by Mr. Haywood, assistant professor of music, Queen's College, Flushing, New York.



ASK any average group of Americans to sing *Carry Me Back to Old Virginy*, and without the slightest hesitation they will do so. But in response to the question, "Who wrote it?" 90 per cent will answer, "Stephen Foster"; a few with a dubious shake of the head, will say, "It's a Negro spiritual, or perhaps a folk tune"; and only 2 per cent will know the correct answer. These facts I discovered while preparing my book on James A. Bland.¹ And yet *Carry Me Back to Old Virginy* is taught to most of our public school children. It is included in a great many school and community songbooks in which the author's name is plainly printed. Obviously, our music teachers do not consider it important to mention the composer when teaching the song. However, it is not entirely their fault.

¹ *The Outstanding Songs of James A. Bland*, E. B. Marks Music Corporation, New York, 1946.

Most of our histories on American music, encyclopedias, and handbooks fail to take cognizance of the composer of one of America's best loved and most popular songs.

James A. Bland is one of the most neglected of America's composers. Until a few years ago no attempt had been made to assemble information about him. However, a year ago last July, a number of newspapers carried a story which made the readers realize for the first time the importance and significance of Bland. It told of the unveiling of a monument to the composer in a cemetery in Merion, Pennsylvania. The simple and deeply impressive ceremony was attended by the Governor of Virginia, Irene Bland, the aged sister of James, delegates of various Southern states, and members of the Lions' Club. It was the Lions who, after the Commonwealth of Virginia had adopted *Carry Me Back to Old Virginy* as its official state song in 1940, successfully organized a campaign and raised funds to give due recognition to Bland. After a long search the grave was finally discovered in a neglected corner of a cemetery on the outskirts of Philadelphia.

The inscription on the headstone reads: "James A. Bland. October 22, 1854—May 6, 1911. Negro composer of 'Carry Me Back to Old Virginy' and 600 other songs." Quite an impressive creative output! It merits some recognition if not discussion and critical evaluation by our musical scholars. Why then this complete silence and neglect? It is not easy to answer that question, and

yet some conjecture might be offered.

First, James A. Bland was a Negro. And American minstrelsy, although portraying Negro life was the white man's entertainment. Second, Bland failed to secure copy-right protection for his many songs. Only 53 are listed in the Congressional Library, and only 38 copies are in the files there. Many of Bland's songs became the property of minstrel singers and other entertainers. The name of the composer was completely forgotten. (It was common procedure in American minstrelsy for the owner and chief performer of the troupe to lay claim to the songs they performed. Thus, years before, many of Foster's songs had been claimed by Christy). And yet another reason for Bland's obscurity was that he spent about twenty years of his life—from about 1882 to 1901—in England and Scotland. He was away from his native land, and out of touch with it. His songs lived on, but the composer was forgotten.

A few facts of his life might shed light on his personality, experiences, and creative gifts. James A. Bland was a descendant of a long line of free colored people. His mother was born in Wilmington, Delaware, and his father, Allen A. Bland, was born in Charleston, South Carolina. From 1845 to 1848 he was enrolled in the preparatory department of Oberlin College. Some time later, Mr. Bland moved with his family to Flushing, New York, where James was born on October 22, 1854.

Not many years after James's birth his father was appointed to the position of Examiner in the U. S. Patent Office. He was the first colored man to hold such a post. The whole family settled in Washington, D. C., not far from Howard University. James attended the public schools in the capital, and after graduation from high school both he and his father registered as students in Howard University, the father studying in the Department of Law. In college young James did not shine as a scholar, but his affability and conviviality won him many friends. He was much sought after by many social groups because of his great gifts as entertainer and singer.

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and composer before the members of the Manhattan Club, an organization of colored clerks of various government agencies. James had been employed as a page in the House of Representatives, and was thus qualified for membership in the Club. With some other members, he organized a glee club. He was frequently engaged to entertain prominent guests and visitors in Washington, D. C. At social gatherings of the Club, James Bland often performed many of his own compo-

sitions. One of his early songs, *Christmas Dinner*, that later gained wide popularity, was first performed at one of the meetings of the Manhattan Club.

Restless, energetic, and talented, James Bland soon felt the urge to join up with some theatrical troupe. Encouraged by people who had seen him perform and who were enthusiastic about his tuneful songs, he set out to try his talents in minstrelsy. There were then numerous highly successful traveling minstrel

companies. But with the exception of very few, they were in the hands of white performers. They were not too eager to open their doors to a Negro artist. It was one thing to portray the Negro, and quite another matter to engage one professionally.

It is not surprising that James Bland's first success was as a member of an all-colored troupe—the very successful Callender's Original Georgia Minstrels. They were advertised as "the great Southern Slave Troupe," with four end men whose delineations were uproariously funny. From an advertisement in the *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, December 11, 1875, we learn that they performed at the Academy of Music, with the endorsement of such prominent citizens as William Lloyd Garrison, Oliver Wendell Holmes, James Russell Lowell, and P. T. Barnum.

In 1878 the Callender Minstrels were purchased by Jack Haverly. As the Minstrel Carnival of Genuine Colored Minstrels they were presented to New York audiences at Niblo's Garden, under Haverly's personal management, from March 29 until May 8, 1879. It was indeed a great opportunity to witness such a "gargantuan, massive" spectacle as only Haverly could assemble. Two features especially are worth noting: "The Spanish Students" and "The Four Claws Cirkuss." In the big gala cast we find such Negro minstrel celebrities as Bland, Kersands, Green, Holden, Devonear, Bowen, Otter, Anderson, McIntosh, Hawkins, Mack, Grace, Ousley, Reynolds, Burton and Simms. After its success in New York the troupe opened Haverly's Brooklyn season on August 23. They then made a successful tour to the Pacific Coast, under the management of Gustave Frohman.

Encouraged by the success of his Mastodon Troupe, which played London in the summer of 1880, Haverly took his all-colored troupe to England the next year. They opened at His Majesty's Theatre, London, in July, 1881. Harry Reynolds, English minstrel impresario, has left us a vivid description of his impressions of the first performance of this amazing troupe of all colored artists:

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When the curtain went up on opening night it disclosed on the stage about 65 real Negroes, both male and female, ranging in shades of complexions from the coal black Negro to the light brown mulatto or octoroon. They were of all ages, from the ancient Uncle Tom's and Aunt Chloe's, smart young coons and wenches, down to the little pickaninny a few months old nestling in its mother's lap. Their costumes were of the plantation, in a picturesque setting somewhat reminiscent of the Jubilee Festival Scene from *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. There were 16 corner men in all; eight bones and eight tambourines arranged in two rows on the stage. A particular feature of their business was the smart manner in which they worked together, making a picturesque display in unison with their bones and tambourines. Jubilee quartettes and spirituals, interspersed with comic ditties and witticisms by the comedians. Perhaps the best of the vocalists was Richard Little, a deep bass singer. He possessed a powerful voice, of excellent quality in the upper register but rather guttural in the bottom notes—a characteristic of many colored vocalists. Billy Kersands was the principal comedian, a big man, with a big mouth to match, who got a lot of capital out of that amusing ditty, *Mary's Gone with a Coon*. James Bland introduced to this country that once very popular ditty, *O, Dem Golden Slippers*. Some clever specialties were introduced by a troupe of twenty dancers and a banjo orchestra. Bob Mack introduced a novel act. Dressed as a big rooster he had a combat with a genuine little bantam with most amusing effect. McIntosh made some excellent comedy with a big drum with which he got terribly entangled. First he dived right over it, then underneath it. He was all over it, everywhere in fact but inside it; but he always came up just in time for his beat. W. H. Allen gave an excellent display of high pedestal clog dancing, and the Bohee Brothers made their first appearances in this country with this troupe. Their entertainment consisted of ballads, banjo solos, and duets, and their famous double banjo song and dance in the orthodox costume of velvet coats, knee breeches and jockey caps.

After a season of two or three months at His Majesty's Theatre they toured the principal cities before returning to America in the late spring of 1882.

In April 1884 James Bland was back with his old pals playing at the Holborn Amphitheatre. The troupe was the Callender's All-Colored Minstrels, consisting of a combination of Haverly's Colored Minstrels and Callender's Georgia Minstrels. They were now under the management of Charles and Gustave

Frohman. Many of the old members were still there.

James Bland was active and successful, both as end man and as composer for the troupe. However, whether sensing the grotesque distortions of these performances, or realizing the bigger money that could be made as an independent performer or producer, James Bland decided to remain in England. For about twenty years he was the idol of all England and Scotland. His salary for those days was phenom-

enal, amounting to \$10,000 a year, exclusive of his income from songs. His performances won the plaudits of all English society, from royalty to commoner. His songs and jokes brought tears and laughter to all. According to information supplied by an aged cousin of James Bland, King Edward, then Prince of Wales, witnessed Bland's performances and honored him on many occasions. Obviously the English sensed in this talented Negro and the other members of his troupe some of the direct-

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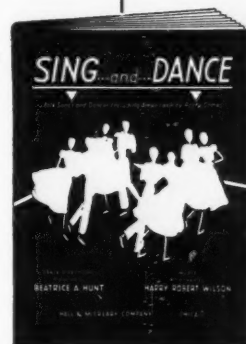
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ness, simplicity, and nostalgic charm of the early minstrel shows. For these did not succumb to Haverly's extravaganzas. That the English were altogether moved and charmed by Negro minstrelsy is eloquently observed by Thackeray, who after witnessing a performance of an American minstrel group, wrote:

I heard a humorous balladist not long since, a minstrel with wool on his head, and an ultra Ethiopian complexion, who performed a Negro ballad that I confess moistened these spectacles in a most unex-

pected manner. I have gazed at thousands of tragedy queens dying on the stage and expiring in appropriate blank-verse, and I never wanted to wipe them. They have looked up, be it said, at many scores of clergymen, without being dimmed, and behold: A vagabond with a corked face and a banjo sings a little song, strikes a wild note, which sets the heart thrilling with happy pity.

It is no wonder, then, that American minstrels found a tour through England a lucrative venture, and that Bland scored a success.

And yet, in 1901, after twenty years of fame and fortune, James Bland returned to his homeland—to Washington, D. C. Destitute and penniless, he was taken in by a boyhood friend, who also gave him an insignificant desk job in his office. What tragedy had befallen this "best Ethiopian songwriter in the world" as Bland modestly called himself? Was it solely extravagance? Unfortunately nothing is known of his social life and experiences during his long stay in Europe.

Discouraged and saddened, James Bland moved to Philadelphia where he died in May, 1911. There was no long line of mourners to accompany the great minstrel to his grave. Neither were there any announcements of his passing in the press. For many years no one even knew where his remains were laid to rest. In 1939, with the aid of the dim recollection of one of Bland's surviving sisters, the cemetery, but not the grave was discovered. And thus in a forgotten corner of the little Negro cemetery of Merion, Pennsylvania, after careful search among the eroded headstones the forgotten singer's grave was found. And what was left was "a small mound covered with weeds and poison ivy."

Prolific Composer

James Bland composed more than six hundred songs. Like Stephen Foster, with whom he is often compared, Bland wrote most of his songs for immediate use in minstrel shows. They were composed in the heat of performance, amidst the hurry and excitement of travel and rehearsal, and for definite characters. Although Bland's songs often lack the universal appeal that Stephen Foster's works possessed, yet both composers had the qualities that are found in all true folk artists, namely, spontaneous lyricism, simplicity and homeliness of text and melody, a nostalgic quality, and care-free humor and warmth.

Moreover, James Bland, because of his Negro ancestry, surpassed Foster in ability to capture poignantly and significantly the lyric mood, the rhythmic pulse, and melodic contour of his people. Whereas many of Foster's songs were inspired by and were often imitations of Celtic-English-American folksongs, Bland's

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melodies and rhythms give a much truer representation of the Negro idiom, particularly of the spirituals. This religious element in Bland's songs was largely attributable to the gospel hymns of the evangelical denominations.

Bland deserves a place among the great composers who have enriched our musical heritage. Let us learn and sing more of his delightful songs.

FREED

(Continued from page 8)

phony programs were 7 per cent American, the New York Philharmonic, 7 per cent, while the Philadelphia Orchestra was only 5 per cent American. On the other hand the programs of the National Symphony in Washington under Kindler, which also has to earn a living, were 17 per cent American. Those of the Cleveland Orchestra, under Szell, were 14 per cent American; the Los Angeles, under Wallenstein, 15 per cent American; and the Columbus Philharmonic, under Izler Solomon (which performed a total of 54 works), 22 per cent American.

Recently I walked into Town Hall and Carnegie Hall and took a copy of every advance announcement they had on display. The breakdown of them was as follows: 26 piano recitals were announced—14 by foreign artists and 12 by Americans. Of the 14 programs by foreign artists 12 had not a single item by an American composer. One of the remaining two pianists had studied at the Curtis Institute for many years, so he was in reality American trained. Can I be blamed for wondering how that single remaining item got on the program? A Mexican pianist making his debut plays Mexican music; a Swiss plays Swiss music; a Spaniard, a Hungarian, a Russian, a Palestinian, a Pole, a Dane each play new music of their own countries. But apparently none of them have ever heard of American music!

Let us examine the American pianists' programs. Four of these (33 per cent) contained not a single American item. The programs of the vocalists show another picture. Here, in nine programs, all but one listed a group of songs by American composers.

Evidently there are mixed emotions with regard to American music. Some people think it is performed less than it deserves; others, most of them foreign artists, think it does not deserve to be performed at all. Or am I misinterpreting the picture? Can it be that foreign artists know nothing about American music because we have not told them about it and that is why they do not play it in America? Can it be that we in America know about Spanish and Swiss and Brazilian and

Bulgarian music because artists of these nationalities have done such a good job of telling us about it? Or is it simply a matter of American music being bad while all other music is good?

At this meeting we want no hallelujahs for American music. Nor do we want to close our eyes to certain aspects of the American scene. No one can deny that when Bizet's *Carmen* failed at its premiere in France (a failure that killed Bizet, who believed in his opera), French

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music did *not* fail with it. Nor can anyone deny that when Bernard Rogers' opera *The Warrior* failed last season at the Metropolitan, *all* American opera was crucified by the American press and in the American mind.

Many American composers, erroneously I believe, have taken the attitude that everyone is against them. But everyone has a stake in American music, including the listening public. After all, the performer, the publisher, the manager,

the critic, and the public are all Americans who love their country and take pride in its greatness. This is the keynote of the Composers and Authors Guild symposium. As far as we know, never before have publishers, composers, critics, teachers, performers, and managers appeared on the same platform together to discuss American music.

We hope that the discussion will be frank, free, and courageous and that American music will profit therefrom. Perhaps in the past the

discussions have been one-sided and not always courageous enough to call a spade a spade. Courage is one of the noblest virtues of mankind and all fine leadership is made up of courage plus intelligence. To be a leader in music requires courage no less than in any other human endeavor. Can it be that American music is waiting for courageous leaders in all the various departments of music? We in CAG sincerely hope that this meeting will help point the way.

• • •

The following comments were made by Mr. Freed in the general discussion which followed the program of talks at the Symposium.—*Editor*

I WANT to take issue with two statements made by Mr. Levine (see page 23). He says that music is international and he classifies it not as German or French, but as good or bad. Then he says that since American songs are being sung and American orchestral music is being played, it follows that they are good, and if American instrumental music is not being played it is because it is not good.

Regarding the first statement, I agree that the appreciation of fine music does not depend on the country of its origin. All fine music has universal values and it is because of these values that a Frenchman can enjoy German music, and a German, Russian music. But I disagree heartily when Mr. Levine tries to bunch all good music together and say there is no French, German, Russian, or American music, only international music.

Verdi's *Aida*, a masterpiece, undoubtedly has universal values, but it started its life as an Italian work, by an Italian composer, written in Italian for the Italian people to listen to.

Let us not start to build American music by disguising it as international and thereby abolishing it entirely with a stroke of the pen. After all, Russian music is the result of more than one hundred years of creative music energy on the part of Russians from Glinka to Shostakovich. To call that energy "international energy" and to call that music "international music" would be a misstatement.

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America, too, has an energy and a Melos. As Douglas Moore points out, we in America have inherited all the other traits of our European ancestors and beaten them to it in many fields. Our scientific and industrial skill is famous. Our social and political leadership has done pretty well too, for we gave the Declaration of Independence to the world fourteen years before the French Revolution, and followed this with the Bill of Rights. Our drama, our art, our literature are known and respected the world over.

These achievements are all the result of our European ancestry. As I stated elsewhere, I don't feel any younger than any European composer of my age. In fact I am quite tired of being told that I come from a young country and a young people. If all the foregoing is true, how did it happen that we were endowed with practically all the gifts of our European ancestors except the one of creative musical talent?

Regarding the second point, that when Americans write good instrumental music it will be played, I wish it were as simple as that. One example will suffice to make my meaning clear, I am sure. Schubert never heard a single one of his eight or nine symphonies. He was practically an unknown composer, though a genius. During his lifetime his music was not good enough to be played. But when his body was "a'moldering in his grave" the symphonies were discovered and have been played furiously ever since. Should American music be called upon to lie "a'moldering in its grave," too, to prove that it is good music?

KASTENDIECK

(Continued from page 13)

coach, a music teacher, and even a college professor. What good or what harm these do is beyond the scope of this discussion. At times this critic thinks that the harm is almost irreparable for the reasons already expressed. The point is simply that the concert or recital program inevitably stamps the taste, the interest, and the attitude of the performer with regards to his approach to the music. He must take the responsibility for the advice of those

other people if the works on that program are not of his own choosing. Who knows who may have advised him to avoid contemporary music, and by all means American music?

Recitalists and various organizations have not been too conspicuous in their efforts to encourage a native culture. One of the curious phenomena of the musical season is the song recital program. Few singers have the courage to vary its form. That line-up of Italian, German,

French, and English groups, in that order, automatically relegates a group of American songs, if there is any at all, to the end of the program. Most of the time a critic has had to leave before this group is reached. For this he is sometimes grateful, simply because the choice of songs allows the singer to use some cream puff numbers as a gracious gesture to friends. The outcome of this procedure could be suicidal. What would happen to American song if such a vicious cir-



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cle persisted? Since there are many American songs worthy to be heard, this deplorable practice demands up-setting the conventional recital program. I do not think anyone in the audience would be worse off should a singer sometimes be so bold as to include a generous group of songs by Charles Ives.

What has been said of the song recital applies to other recitals. The chronological order is a definite slight to contemporary works. Obviously, a performer who builds his

program from an artistic point of view can conceive of beginning a concert with a contemporary work. Indeed, the critic finds hearing it a refreshing experience. After all, when he has heard the great artists of the day play the musical chest-nuts, he welcomes this kind of re-spite. Needless to say, his interest in the performer may be stimulated by the very fact that the program starts off in this interesting fashion. Such programming may even be fairer to a young performer because

the judgment of his performance is not immediately pitted against the definitive performances of music the critic has heard many times. Some of the touchstones of the so-called classical repertoire should be included to round out the picture, but the avoidance of the contemporary is not altogether natural in the light of common experience. There is sufficient American music already available. The question is, how much has the performer come in contact with it or how much has he been advised against it? He may often be more at his best in contemporary music because it is of his time and within his interpretative grasp.

The present dilemma was presented most graphically to me several months ago in a publicity release. It read to the effect that the "greatest event in the history of Utah" would take place when the Los Angeles Philharmonic came to give eight concerts in connection with the 100th anniversary of Brigham Young University. Of the twenty-eight or twenty-nine works performed, only two were by Americans, and they were short. In the year 1947, is this a fair hearing for American music?

MOORE

(Continued from page 9)

Nor can we make the old explanation which once had some validity—that European training in music cannot be duplicated here. No, the real heart of the problem is a psychological factor which, if we admit and face, can surely be overcome. Great creative periods in art have always come as an expression of the people themselves. What the people want, what they welcome and nourish is what they usually get. The concerto of Prokofieff was the creation of a national spirit that was awakened in Russia a hundred years ago. The pathway from Glinka to Prokofieff and Stravinsky was a long hard one, and a great deal of the credit for these composers belongs to the Russian people themselves.

So long as the American composer is treated as a necessary evil, a charity case rather than a potential source of a great national culture, we shall continue to squander the share of talent which an impartial

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deity spreads thinly about the two hemispheres. If the situation for the American composer has improved in recent years, and we all know it has, it is because more people have come to realize that in terms of the world output today, his work stands high in quality. The great public, however, the public that provides those bumper profits and whose supposed tastes dictate what is to be played, sung, and recorded still remains unconvinced. Of course a work of the power and beauty of the *Fifth Symphony* would help, but I doubt if we shall get it until the men and women who serve as ministers of music to the public see that our composers have sufficient opportunity to develop their obvious potentialities. For it is by performance and performance alone that a great talent can be channeled, refined, and enlarged—I might even say created—by the American people themselves.

Such an attitude does involve sacrifice in individual cases. But in the long-range view does the musical profession fail to realize that every single member of it would profit by a great popular success for American music? The stream of new music must go on if music is to live, and the great American composer to come will be the result of the enlightenment and faith of the music profession which will give to him not charity and tolerance but support and understanding in the creation of his career.

HAUSER

(Continued from page 19)

to have about twenty-two copies. Even with the least expensive duplicating process, the cost of reproducing these scores runs into thousands of dollars for each work. The composer and the publisher derive most of their income on this music from sale or rental of orchestra material and from performance fees. It is easy to estimate the number of performances required to bring back the amount of money spent for preparing the materials. And still there are many American publishers who, year after year, are proud to make these financial contributions to the cause of American music.

A few years ago, in an endeavor to make their copyrighted "grand" works more readily available to sym-

phony orchestras, ASCAP worked out with the managers of the orchestras a licensing arrangement that seems to be operating successfully. This arrangement permits freer use by orchestras of American serious music, and it is hoped that more performances will result.

Publishers are constantly in contact with concert artists, teachers, and broadcasters in an endeavor to interest them in new music. Mail campaigns are made throughout the year to obtain complete coverage of

the music market. Recording companies are kept informed by mail and by visits of representatives highly trained in this phase of promotion.

The publisher who has vision knows that his future depends on the composer who will write the music of tomorrow. Yesterday's and today's music is paying the bills now, but music, like everything else, changes in style and appeal. The masters, we believe, will live longer than any of us here, but not all

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published music is from the pens of masters. It is the publisher's duty to his business that he constantly search out new masters in his own generation and, with encouragement and support, give them an opportunity to bring their works to posterity through the printed sheet.

Yet the publisher cannot do it alone. The symphony orchestras are in the same position as the publishers with regard to their future existence. They too owe much to their business. True, they cannot play all the new music that is written, nor do I think they would help the American composers if they attempted to force whole programs of new music on their audiences. The public must be educated to new trends. Just as a composer gains experience by spoiling reams of manuscript paper, he will develop a keen sense of values if he hears his music performed. The symphony orchestras can pay their debt to the art that supports them by playing one American work on each program and by setting aside one rehearsal each month to read through new manuscripts for the edification of

the composer, the critics, and the publisher. What I have said about the symphony orchestras applies equally to concert artists, string quartets, and other chamber music groups. They too have an unpaid debt to the American composer.

Then there are the recording companies. They can do much in the long and difficult task of orienting the layman to the new music. They should share the burden with the publisher by earmarking a portion of their available funds for production of serious American music, on records. While printed music is worthless unless it is performed by accomplished players, a record can be played, even by a child, if a phonograph is handy. Therefore, the record companies must be induced to cooperate in this matter if for no other reason than to assure their own continuance in business.

Radio has shown a willingness to gamble on new American music. It is reasonable to assume that if record companies, symphony orchestras, and performing artists do their share in bringing this music to listeners, we can count on continued support

from radio. When this interest becomes widespread, the publisher can afford to increase his budget for publishing new American music, for the gamble will be reduced in inverse ratio to the increased interest.

The problem is not one that can be solved by any one group represented at this Forum. It can be solved only if each of us, including the composer, frankly recognizes his responsibility in the matter and is willing to work with the others to reach the goal that we collectively are seeking.

THOMPSON

(Continued from page 39)

compositions have been played at school, but most of my music is played by outside organizations."

Unlike the foregoing students, whose creative work in music was almost entirely self-inspired, were a girl in Indianapolis, a girl in Evanston (Illinois), and a boy in California. These fortunate students had teachers who either called their attention to the music contests or themselves sent in their students'

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classroom compositions. The Evanson girl, a prize winner in 1946 as well as in 1947, said her theory teachers first told her about the contest and then reminded her of it each year—reminded all the members of her theory class, in fact, and “all others in the school who compose. She makes the contest a class project and assigns everyone to write a composition for one of the classifications or to bring to class one that fits a classification. She helps us copy them correctly and keeps at us until we send them off!”

Posing her own question, the Evanson girl continued, “What value do I find in composing? Well, I like to compose. When I’m working on a number I feel light-headed and strong—as though I would never tire. When I leave the piano and go off to do something else, I feel that happiness inside me like a secret—for a few weeks I am God’s only child. Then when I finish something, I think I will stop and take a rest for a while. But I can’t keep away from writing music very long.”

The Indianapolis girl wrote, “The Scholastic contests mean quite a

great deal to our school (Arsenal Technical High School) and the students are urged to participate. I entered the contest last year with a piano composition; this year I finished work on a graduation march I started last year. It was merely an experiment. I get a lot of enjoyment out of composing music because I feel that I am creating something someone will enjoy, even if it is only my family and friends.”

On Teacher’s Insistence

Said the California boy, a student at the University of California since February, 1947, “I started to play the violin three and a half years ago and a year ago started to write short compositions for the instrument. It is difficult for me to express myself musically because I have had only one semester of harmony in high school. My harmony teacher insisted on submitting my composition to the Scholastic Music Awards, although I felt it was too short and incomplete. Now I am very grateful to her and to the judges, as their recognition of my efforts gives me a

desire to work harder and create something better.” This boy, of Russian parentage, said he was fond of all the fine arts and that he found “great satisfaction” in writing music and in that way expressing himself.

“Although our school usually participates in the art contest sponsored by Scholastic Magazines, I was the first ever to enter the Creative Music contest,” wrote a Pittsburgh boy. “Having an elementary knowledge of the piano keyboard, I became interested in improvising original melodies and harmonies. My first attempt was a simple hymn tune. Then I wrote a march. About this time I read about the contest in our school paper and I spent my entire Christmas vacation ‘bandstrating’ for it the march I had written some time before. Among my latest compositions is a processional march which was used at our graduation exercises this year. . . . As a result of my success I believe our school officials hereafter will encourage more creative music. And my success has encouraged me to compose even more.” This boy’s concluding observation was, “I feel that my work in

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composing music will greatly help me in my career, which I have decided will be teaching others music."

A band director's praise and encouragement of an Iowa boy's "few attempts to set my ideas down on paper" led him to spend two years writing fanfares and small arrangements for the high school band, and then to a decision to devote his entire music effort to composition. "I intend to spend the rest of my life trying to improve band music and bring it to a level attained by orchestra music," he asserted, adding that he had his own theory of "band-stration" which he had tried to exemplify in his contest entry.

"I know of nothing which gives me more satisfaction than hearing a work played which I have written and worked on. I think that nothing in music is more satisfying and helpful to the young musician than composition," the Iowa student added.

Granting that the music students quoted in this article represent a restricted and "above average" group, surely their reactions provide grounds for the assumption that composition by teen-agers could

become a prolific and valuable source of needed new music, as well as a contribution to "a new language of expression" for American youth. And because of these possibilities the firm of C. G. Conn Ltd., musical instrument manufacturers, feels a great satisfaction in having had a part in sponsoring the Creative Music Awards contest the past few years.

HUMAN

(Continued from page 22)

tution for the advancement of creative music, for they will be made to know that such works represent only the cream of contemporary accomplishment. Moreover, the audiences in each region will be prepared, conditioned, to listen to these works.

Under the system of merit even the newcomer, the meek and mild composer may win regular hearings. Yes, even the nonaggressive composer without influence at court will receive performance. Such a miracle can be made to happen on Fifty-seventh Street.

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can be rendered by the institution to those composers who have not yet "arrived" because of lack of experience in performance, perhaps, or lack of workmanship. Hundreds of talented composers now drifting helplessly can be salvaged by technical guidance or intelligent cooperation.

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Such a group within your Federation could, I think, give the world the real Voice of America.

JACOBI

(Continued from page 25)

cently did to me, that they believe themselves to be endowed with a sort of sixth sense, we can only feel that they must have left that sixth sense at home when they proclaimed, as they did, that *La Traviata* and *Carmen* were failures at their respective first performances, and that Meyerbeer's *Le Prophete* (all but

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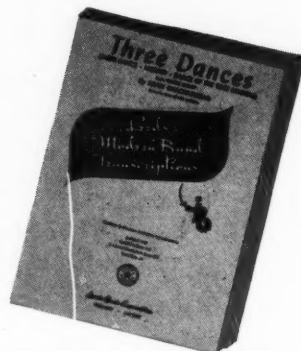
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forgotten now) was an eternal masterpiece! A famous foreign conductor (a great musician but a modest one) once said to me, when I asked him his opinion of a certain work new at the time, "Mr. Jacobi, I am not enough of an amateur (dilettante) to know what I think of a piece of music after having heard it only once." So you must judge a new piece of music critically; judge it for yourself. And you must also give it a little time.

We composers are eager to meet our public and we feel that you are eager to meet us too. That, perhaps, is the great function of the NPMC—to bring the contemporary composer and the contemporary public together. We are trying to do our share. I hope you will also try to do yours.

Let your teachers and your music clubs make demands on us. Order music to be written for some special occasion, for composers like nothing better than to be treated like shoemakers—that is, to feel that that which we are producing is really in demand. Give us commissions, give us performances, ask us to lecture

before you (for some of us like to talk), give us publication! We will flower if you nurture us just a little and you will, I believe, find that we are closer to you than you suspect. You have done all of these things, I know. So I can only say, do it some more!

SMITH

(Continued from page 14)

ish, must be an organic development. We must sing our own songs, play our own piano pieces, and listen to the more profound thoughts of our composers. If the creative founts of our land are not heard or fail to produce, we become at best humanists reminiscing with the masterpieces of the past or the fine flowering of our contemporaries. In order to develop our own music we must listen to it. There must be an action and reaction between the composer and the public in order to stimulate the creative process. The National Federation of Music Clubs can do a great deal to foster the movement. How?

By making possible more performances of carefully chosen works,

utilizing forces and groups within the organization, bringing pressure upon local groups such as symphony orchestras, choruses, and so on to perform native contemporary music.

By commissioning the best composers throughout the country to write works for performances under the auspices of the Federation.

By arranging an interchange of works performed or commissioned from various parts of the country, especially those that have proved noteworthy, so that their performance will not be merely localized, but widely disseminated. From these the best could be chosen for the Biennial Conventions.

By seeing that phonograph records of American music are available in our conservatories, schools, and colleges and collected by our children just as libraries of books are formed.

By spreading the Composers Forum plan throughout the country, enlisting the interest and services of the best and most progressive creative musicians and musicologists in the various communities and regions to promote and carry it out.

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LEVINE

(Continued from page 23)

cause in effect we have only one operatic institution in this country, which is a deplorable situation in itself.

This leaves us with only one field in which music by Americans is rarely played—the field of instrumental music—the piano, the violin, the cello. There is only one conclusion to be drawn from this fact, namely, that Americans have not yet written great or even good instrumental music. When such music is written, it will be played. Oh, what our violinists would not give for a new concerto, at least as good as the Beethoven, or the Brahms, or even the Bruch! Whether written by John Doe or Ivan Dinsky. And even so within the past few years I have seen several concerti written by Americans; works which our artists have seized upon with avidity. A two-piano concerto by Martinu, a violin concerto by the same composer, a cello concerto by Samuel Barber, a two-piano concerto by Harl McDonald are but a few examples. All

were performed by great artists, with the collaboration of great conductors and their orchestras.

This brings me to the question, Do I, as a manager, advise my artists to play this music by Americans or vice versa? Neither. I want my artists to succeed. To do that they must play well and play good music. The choice is theirs. If they ask for my advice, I give it to them for what it is worth. But my most earnest advice to artists is: Play good music, music that inspires you, and above all, music that you yourself feel you play best. Because I firmly believe that the most salutary musical results are based on an equilateral triangle—an inspired work from the pen of an inspired composer, an inspired performance by a great performer, a receptive and musically intelligent audience. Each angle of this triangle has many shades and variations. The highest expression of all three combined create those rare occasions of great musical thrills which I can count on the fingers of my hands in a lifetime crowded with concerts all over the world.

In 1925 I toured the Orient with

a famous pianist. En route from Dairen, Korea, to Tokyo, Japan, we stopped off at a city called Hakata on the southern island of Japan. We gave a concert at noon, between trains. The city at that time had a population of one million and only three representatives of the white race. There was an audience of two thousand Japanese men and women, who had checked their shoes at the door and sat on the floor to hear a program by the late Mischa Levitzki. The program was exactly like a program he might have played in Carnegie Hall. The biggest applause was accorded to the same numbers that would receive the biggest applause in Carnegie Hall, the Bach-Tausig *Toccata and Fugue*, the *Appassionata Sonata*, the Liszt *Sixth Rhapsody*. It was then, early in my managerial career, that I decided that a great piece of music will be acclaimed with equal enthusiasm by a barefoot Japanese and a well-shod socialite in America.

During the past twenty-seven years I have booked many artists for tours of Australia and New Zealand. Because of the peculiar concert con-

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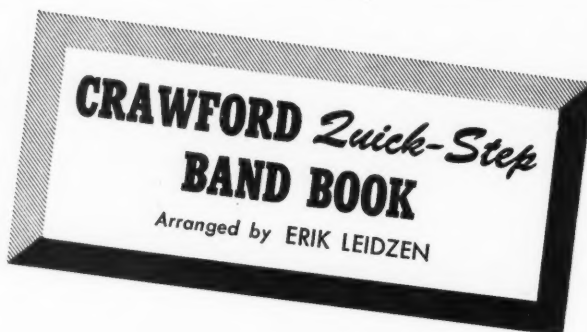
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ditions in those countries, an artist must have at least five or six entirely different programs for the Antipodes. For instrumentalists it is not so difficult. For singers it is quite a chore. The Australian managers would always warn me against the inclusion of what they called "cheap American ballads" in the programs. I always brushed the warning aside with the statement that the artists will sing what they please. Invariably those so-called "cheap American ballads" met with great success. A Giannini had the same success with LaForge's *The Crucifix* as she did with an Italian folksong. A Flagstad had the same success with Charles' *When I Have Sung My Song* as she did with Grieg's *Ich Liebe Dich*. And, of course, a John Charles Thomas, who only recently completed a phenomenal tour of Australasia, had his biggest success with Malotte's *The Lord's Prayer*, Guion's *Home on the Range* and other appealing selections. This is my answer to the question, "Are composers necessary to a musical culture?" It is as futile to discuss such a ques-

tion as it is to debate whether the sun is necessary to life on earth.

A few months ago I spent a week in a large Southern city. I met the president of the local Civic Music Association. He was a physician by profession, a music-lover by avocation, because, as he told me, his mother had been a piano teacher. He was proud about the fine concerts his association was bringing to the city. But he complained to me that the artists often played or sang the wrong programs. I immediately became wary. I am accustomed to complaints from the great American hinterland that artists play or sing down to audiences, that they bring inferior programs to the cities on their tours. I asked him to elaborate the point. He mentioned Ezio Pinza. Pinza is one of those artists who constantly searches for new material of every country's literature and who believes that a song recital should be a recital of songs and not a display of an artist's virtuosity in familiar arias. This was exactly the doctor's complaint. Pinza's program was mostly unfamiliar, so that the audi-

ence missed *Comin' Through the Rye* and *My Mother Bids Me Bind My Hair and Funiculi*.

My answer to the question "How can music by Americans be made so-called box-office?" is: let the composers write good music and it will be played and sung and familiarity will make it popular.

In conclusion I should like to give one constructive suggestion. Organize an influential committee representing composers, publishers, performers, and music-lovers and agitate that each of our four great radio chains contribute one hour a week to a program of Music by Americans. It is not too much to ask for one hour out of 168. Let this committee select the music to be performed on these hours, in consultation of course with the program departments of the respective chains. Ask the listeners to vote on the music they like best. Prizes might be offered for the most popular compositions. Who knows, a cigarette maker might even come forward to sponsor such a program commercially!

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LINDSTROM

(Continued from page 15)

It is absurd to set up a double standard—one for local music and another for music on tour. The appetite for praise is, of course, unlimited. The ability to take adverse criticism is almost nonexistent.

I am beginning to think that the answer is twofold: (1) preparatory writing in advance of a concert to explain the nature of the works to be heard and to build up an acceptance of the new and the strange; (2) printing in detail *all* the music *news* of the community.

This can but stimulate interest in the subject of music; it can but produce a natural growth in taste as well.

I do not think that special programs should be prepared for small communities. What the artist sings in Chicago and San Francisco he ought to sing in Hartford.

I cannot discover that a Broadway show prepares special dialogue or music for the provinces. If the cast is different that is only because of economic necessity. The show is the same. The music ought to be the same, too, for big and little cities.

It is in the little city that grass-roots culture is created. I venture to say that the early tastes of the average New York concertgoer were formed in the little city or in the country. Whether or not that is true, certainly the concert artist is dependent upon taste in the provinces for his living. New Yorkers cannot live by taking in one another's cultural washing.

I firmly believe that New York is far less a criterion than most metropolitan centers such as Chicago, Philadelphia, or San Francisco. In such cities, lack of recognition may be taken as synonymous with mediocrity. In New York even greatness can be submerged and unrecognized simply because of abnormal competition. A lot of geniuses could be lost here. New York's facilities for cultural expression are not commensurate with its size; they are only large enough for its appetite.

The comparison is, to my way of thinking, all in the small city's favor. In behalf of all small cities I want to register a protest that we are being impoverished of our best talents because of the chimera of Town

Hall and Carnegie Hall and the criterion that is supposed to reside there. I wonder if it does.

Meanwhile I refuse to be discounted by the word provincialism. It is in the small cities of this country that musical creation has its grass roots.

TAYLOR

(Continued from page 17)

their students to give them a well-rounded repertory. If they would make their studios workshops for the appraisal of new works, much time would be saved in finding the finest new American music. The public would be the beneficiary of such a scheme, inasmuch as it would be safe to assume that with these forces working together, only the choicest music would ever reach the concert platform.

In short, I believe that the American teacher can become an important factor in this unified plan that I have briefly described. I feel that I speak for every sincere and serious American teacher when I say that we, as a profession, stand ready to aid in any organized plan that will place American music where it rightfully belongs; namely, in a position of prestige and respect.

MARESCA

(Continued from page 41)

pate in choirs of different religions. Helen Traubel, for example, sang in the Pilgrim Congregational Church and the United Hebrew Temple Choir during the same period. I wonder how many members of each of these two churches exchanged visits or are even familiar with the types of choir work presented in the other. I wish that some of those who are concertgoers would realize that there is a great deal of wonderful music outside of the concert halls.

The columns of the newspapers usually list church services and, on special occasions, even publish the musical programs. Other information about possible churches to attend may be obtained from friends and acquaintances of other faiths or from officials of the various churches. I don't think anyone need feel the slightest diffidence about attending these services or requesting informa-

tion concerning them. In my own experience people have been delighted at my interest and glad to recommend the best places and times to go.

Incidentally, the music is not the only worth-while experience to be gained by going to different churches. No one with imagination and sensibility can attend the services of these many faiths and hear the noble music expressive of varied beliefs without acquiring a deeper understanding of religions.

GORODNITSKI

(Continued from page 35)

Prize, the Rachmaninoff Fund, and others that are announced from time to time.

In addition, important managers are interested in young musicians whose talents not only show promise but indicate the fulfillment of that promise. These managers are, of course, in the business of making money and they do not want flash-in-the-pan talent on their list, but good, substantial musicians whose artistry will keep pace with their own maturity.

With so many legitimate avenues for the public hearing of young talent, with so many managerial outlets available for promising talent that shows evidence of attaining artistic maturity, there is no need for foisting a youngster, who at best has not had time to acquire sound fundamentals and who echoes another's ideas, upon the public. It would be ever so much better to let that youngster have a normal physical and musical growth first. Then, when the musical capacity is proved to be a deep and sustained one, public appearance would be of greatest benefit to all concerned.

AFM—CODE

(Continued from page 31)

Since it is in the interest of the music educator to attract public attention to his attainments for the purpose of enhancing his prestige and subsequently his income, and it is in the interest of the professional musician to create more opportunities for employment at increased remuneration, it is only natural that upon certain occasions some incidents might occur in which the in-



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terests of the members of one or the other group might be infringed upon, either from lack of forethought or from lack of ethical standards among individuals.

In order to establish a clear understanding as to the limitations of the fields of professional music and music education in the United States, the following statement of policy is adopted by the Music Educators National Conference and the American Federation of Musicians, and is recommended to those serving in their respective fields.

I. MUSIC EDUCATION

The field of music education, including the teaching of music and such demonstrations of music education as do not directly conflict with the interests of the professional musician, is the province of the music educator. It is the primary purpose of all the parties hereto that the professional musician shall have the fullest protection in his efforts to earn his living from the playing and rendition of music; to that end it is recognized and accepted that all music to be performed under the "code of ethics" herein set forth is and shall be performed in connection with non-profit, non-commercial and non-competitive enterprises. Under the heading of "Music Education" should be included the following:

1. School Functions initiated by the schools as a part of a school program, whether in a school building or other building.

2. Community Functions organized in the interest of the schools strictly for educational purposes, such as those that might be originated by the Parent-Teacher Association.

3. School Exhibits prepared as a part of the school district's courtesies for educational organizations or educational conventions being entertained in the district.

4. Educational Broadcasts which have the purpose of demonstrating or illustrating pupils' achievements in music study, or which represent the culmination of a period of study and rehearsal. Included in this category are local, state, regional, and national school music festivals and competitions held under the auspices of schools, colleges, and/or educational organizations on a non-

profit basis and broadcast to acquaint the public with the results of music instruction in the schools.

5. Civic Occasions of local, state, or national patriotic interest, of sufficient breadth to enlist the sympathies and cooperation of all persons, such as those held by the G.A.R., American Legion, and Veterans of Foreign Wars in connection with their Memorial Day services in the cemeteries. It is understood that affairs of this kind may be participated in only when such participation does not in the least usurp the rights and privileges of local professional musicians.

6. Benefit Performances for local charities, such as the Welfare Federations, Red Cross, hospitals, and so forth, when and where local professional musicians would likewise donate their services.

7. Educational or Civic Services that might beforehand be mutually agreed upon by the school authorities and official representatives of the local professional musicians.

8. Audition Recordings for study purposes made in the classroom or in connection with contest or festival performances by students, such recordings to be limited to exclusive use by the students and their teachers, and not offered for general sale or other public distribution. This definition pertains only to the purpose and utilization of audition recordings and not to matters concerned with copyright regulations. Compliance with copyright requirements applying to recording of compositions not in the public domain is the responsibility of the school, college, or educational organization under whose auspices the recording is made.

II. ENTERTAINMENT

The field of entertainment is the province of the professional musician. Under this heading are the following:

1. Civic parades, ceremonies, expositions, community concerts, and community-center activities (see I, paragraph 2 for further definition); regattas, non-scholastic contests, festivals, athletic games, activities or celebrations, and the like; national, state, and county fairs (see I, paragraph 5 for further definition).

2. Functions for the furtherance,

directly or indirectly, of any public or private enterprise; functions by chambers of commerce, boards of trade, and commercial clubs or associations.

3. Any occasion that is partisan or sectarian in character or purpose.

4. Functions of clubs, societies, civic or fraternal organizations.

5. Statements that funds are not available for the employment of professional musicians, or that if the talents of amateur musical organizations cannot be had, other musicians cannot or will not be employed, or that the amateur musicians are to play without remuneration of any kind are all immaterial.

This code shall remain in force and effect for one year from September 22, 1947. At that time the parties may come together for the purpose of making such revisions in this code as they may deem necessary and as shall be mutually agreed upon.

JAMES C. PETRILLO
*For American Federation
of Musicians*

LUTHER A. RICHMAN
*For Music Educators
National Conference*

HEROLD C. HUNT
*For American Association
of School Administrators*

A FAIR HEARING?

(Continued from page 7)

MILES KASTENDIECK, the metropolitan critic, was asked:

Does New York's large foreign-born population influence the program content in New York City's concert halls because these people want to hear the music of their past; or do you think that this is the result of laziness or indifference on the part of the performers, who know but very little about what has been done in American music?

Does the snobbism of the concert hall enter into the picture at all to overrate the value of music with foreign names and to underrate music with homespun names?

Are critics in favor of new American works on the programs?

Do you feel that the music critic has a part to play in the building of an American music, and if so, what form should his participation take?

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CARL LINDSTROM, who spoke as a representative of the critics from smaller cities was asked:

Does the small-town audience need different programs from those for the Carnegie Hall audience?

Do you think that the small city concertgoer is afraid of new music, considers all new music experimental, and finds it hard to take; or is he no different from his New York cousin?

Can an American musical culture be built on an interest in American music in New York City and an absence of it elsewhere? Is New York's influence so strong that it dictates to the country at large?

Does the continued exodus of small-town talent from their home cities toward New York help or hinder the development of a strong American music? Will, for instance, the wider experience which the artist gains help his home town if and when he returns?

ARTHUR HAUSER was asked to present the publisher's viewpoint and to give his opinion in answer to the following questions:

Does the publisher publish enough American music and does it sell?

Do you feel that the publisher owes anything to American music, and do you think that his support is economically sound as well as artistically and patriotically needed?

What are the qualities of a successful composition? Is it successful because it is good, or because it has been well promoted? What are the steps to good promotion? What happens to good music that is not well promoted? And finally, do you think the music of the past is successful because it is good or because it has been well promoted?

What role should the publisher play in promotion, and what role should the composer play?

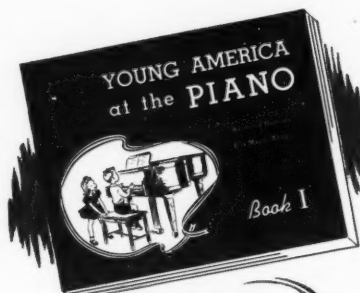
Will not a policy of printing only old-fashioned, or reprinted music eventually ruin the music publishing business and should the publisher be continually looking for new masters to add to his roster of old masters?

DOUGLAS MOORE spoke as an American composer. He was asked:

Do you think the American composer suffers from a dual disability—the public dislikes new music be-

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cause it does not know it and therefore dislikes American music because it is new, as well as because it is American?

Much new foreign music is being continually played here. How do you explain this in the light of the above question?

How do you feel about the foreign artist who ignores American music when he plays his recital as a guest of this country, and for American audiences?

Does the critic treat American music fairly?

GLADYS SWARTHOUT gave clear-cut answers to the following questions directed at her as a performer:

Do you think there is too little good American music?

Do you define the word *good* from the art standpoint or from the public appeal standpoint?

Are the critics in New York particularly hard on new music? Or do you think that the critics are tired of hearing the old arias and repertoire songs and welcome new numbers?

Do the provinces want only familiar music, nothing new, nothing heavy; or can one perform new American music there too?

What part of your success is to be credited to American music, and do you think you would have had comparable success without American music? (This is meant to include not only programmed items, but also the "dessert"—encores.)

How do you react to foreign artists giving concerts in America without a single American item on their programs, and would American artists dare do a comparable thing in foreign countries (give a program in France minus French music, for example)?

Do you feel that as part of the musical culture of America you as an artist play a role in the creating of American music together with the composer?

MARKS LEVINE, speaking as a manager, responded to the following:

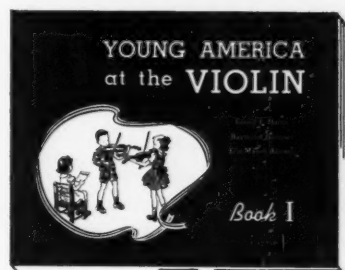
Do you believe that American music on concert programs may be good ethics but is bad business?

Do you advise artists to steer away from American music in the provinces and toward American music in New York or vice versa?

Does the manager owe anything

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to American music as an advancing art, since he derives his livelihood from promoting music here and should the promotion of more American music be part of his creed?

Why does the artist play French music in France, Italian music in Italy, and yet when he comes here does not do us the courtesy of playing some American music?

What suggestions would you give the performer and the composer to make American music box office?

BERNARD TAYLOR was the final speaker. In his capacity of teacher, he was asked:

Is the teacher part of the contemporary scene? In other words, is he the connecting link between the past and the future?

If the Italian teacher specializes in Italian opera, the French teacher in French opera, and so on, what should the American teacher do about American music?

Many of your pupils will have studied for cultural rather than for professional reasons. Should the music of their country be considered as part of their culture, or should it be ignored?

Would you feel better if we had American opera in the United States, and if so can the teacher play any part in its creation?

As Composers-Authors Guild anticipated, there was division of opinion on the subject. The Guild believes that the papers presented merit careful reading because they represent the considered thought of leaders in American musical life.

It only remains to state Composers-Authors Guild's own point of view with respect to the two fundamental questions asked at the beginning of this discussion: "What is American music?" and "Is there any good American music?" To the first the answer is very simple, it cuts across all problems of aesthetics, styles and "isms." Music by American composers is American music. Music by foreign composers is not American music. To the second question the answer is: Yes there is much good American music, but one must look for it if one wishes to find it, for most of it is rarely played and thus is relatively unknown.

What Price Experience?

EVELYN R. CHASE

Miss Chase, instructor at Ball State Teachers College, Muncie Indiana, questions the fairness of encouraging students to provide free entertainment for civic clubs.

THE talented high school and college students of music must grow discouraged furnishing clubs free entertainment, with an occasional luncheon given them as the lollipop for being nice performers. They should be paid for the inconvenience they suffer, and the bus and taxi fares necessary in order "to make it back for that two o'clock class" should be considered even if the group feels that the student entertainer's effort was not worthy of pay.

The audience is delighted if the "artists" perform well, and hands them a few crumbs of thanks, but should the piano be out of tune as it often is at clubs, or the damper pedal broken, the listeners criticize with the same degree of fervor as if they had bought their talent for a thousand dollars. All of which makes the aspiring young artist wonder, "Is music worth all of this thank-you business?"

The groups who expect so much for so little really have persuaded themselves that they are giving the student experience and do not consider the hours of detailed preparation. These same people, who usually cannot tell a Bach Chorale from a Chopin Prelude, readily give the student the credit for missing all the notes that sound wrong in the Shostakovich Polka.

What does youth owe the afternoon clubs, circle meetings, four o'clock teas, morning musicales, and the many other organizations that meet from breakfast time until far into the night? Unless the organizations have created scholarship funds or loans of which the students are the recipients, the latter owe them nothing. How many people would ask an expert landscape gardener to please landscape their yard because

they do it so well, and besides it would give them additional experience and others could view their good work? Or a mason to build a nice garage because he's exceptionally skillful in the art of bricklaying?

Now the student may enjoy sharing and displaying his talent, most youths do, but so many groups who have enjoyed this privilege of free listening have abused it that many schools who aid in producing good talent are rebelling against supplying it free.

Advanced college students may put on an almost professional recital, but the chances are that the audience will be made up of friends, relatives, and other music students.

Club scouts seldom even go hunting for professional talent. Their search is for quick and easy, that's off-my-shoulders programs delivered to their door free—not even C. O. D. The smaller cities are more given to penny pinching than the larger ones. In the larger cities talent is contacted through conservatories and through music departments of colleges and universities, which exact fees for their students' performances.

The program chairmen of clubs everywhere must realize that the good artistic performer did not happen overnight; that years of hard work, long practice, sacrifice perhaps on the part of a parent, plus an ambition to do something exceptionally well are behind his accomplishments. When all organizations create a fund for programs, as their contribution for the encouragement of youth, and agree to pay a reasonable minimum fee for a student performance, they will in turn find themselves with better programs arranged with less effort. It will be an investment that is wise and fruitful.



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